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AN

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL I.

LONDON:

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1847.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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“GOING! Going! Gentlemen and Ladies, for the last time of offering this lot. For the last time. No advance upon this bidding? Going—going—gone!”

Such was the speech which greeted the ears of the Author, from a clear sonorous voice, as, early in the month of May 1842, he entered one of the chambers of the most celebrated, if not the most admired of modern structures. He was enjoying a

distinction which would have been denied a stranger half a century before. Nor did he value it less, because it was shared by a multitude. He was a visitor at Strawberry Hill. He made one of an eager, curious crowd, whose only letter of introduction appeared in the shape of an auctioneer's catalogue.

Even when passing through the monastic entrance into the hall, he could hardly believe, much less reconcile himself to the astounding fact, that he was there—not to look and marvel, but to bid and buy. All the treasures of Strawberry Hill, literary, antiquarian, and artistical, were for sale to the highest bidder. That quaint edifice, on which the author of "The Castle of Otranto" had lavished the resources of his gothic imagination, was to be stripped to the bare walls: those matchless decorations, which at so vast an amount of labour and expense were sought for and collected from every available quarter in Europe, were to be dis-

tributed amongst a thousand owners, at the best price that could be got for them.

It was impossible for any historical student to have entered the place, without recalling to mind some of the numerous associations that marked it as the head quarters of wit and fashion in the last century: but as well as having been the rendezvous of the beauties, the wits, and the gossips of the age, it had been made equally famous as a sort of nursery of Letters, where certain of its most delicate plants had for a considerable period been carefully reared and successfully planted out. The Strawberry Hill personages, in their claims to celebrity, found rivals only in the Strawberry Hill press.

Could a change more violent be conceived than that which had fallen upon it, in the course of the half century that had elapsed since the death of its architect and founder? The visitor, instead of having to pay his compliments to the greatest of fashionable authors, found himself the object of curious

scrutiny from the greatest of fashionable auctioneers. The historical pictures, the rare objects of *vertu*, the choice furniture, the admirable library, were about to melt away before the wand of that potent magician, whose "Going, going, gone," is a form of conjuration more certain in its effects than lips of magi or magister ever uttered. The fair Waldegraves, the sparkling Selwyns, the loquacious Suffolks, had given place to a mob of picture-dealers, booksellers, and curiosity hunters; and piquant scandal, brilliant repartee, and agreeable anecdote, had had to make room for vulgar jokes, common-place puns, and flippant pleasantries. It was a change indeed!

Full of those extremely philosophical reflections that would naturally suggest themselves under such circumstances, the Author was examining a group of miniatures that had been tastefully arranged in the Long Gallery, when he was struck by one that seemed to demand attention, by an

expression of features that would have rendered it prominent among a thousand. It was the face of a young and peculiarly handsome female, in which there was immediately recognizable that rare combination of commanding intellect, with the most feminine softness and grace. Such a face could never have been passed without remark: but, independently of the general expression, there was something in the look of those most intellectual eyes so full of melancholy tenderness, that it was impossible to meet it once without soon desiring to see it again and again.

The face was one that, more perfectly than any other, realized the bright creations of Shakspeare; it would have become the impassioned Juliet, or the tender Desdemona, or the graceful Imogen, or the exquisite Miranda, equally well, because there was palpably so much of sentiment, and romance, and sympathy, in its general expression, as can only be said to exist in their most perfect



proportions, in these examples of the portrait gallery of our great photographer.

It was a long time before he proceeded on the usual tour of inspection. He lingered very much beyond the period allowed at auctions to anticipated purchasers. Nevertheless, he found himself inattentive to the claims of the thousand desirable objects which surrounded him wherever he moved. Art and *Vertu*, Antiquity and Learning, put forth their attractions in vain. He was insensible to the merits of Sir Joshua and Hogarth—the charms of the immortal enamels he passed, unregardful of the fame of Petitot and Boit—he was blind to the value of the Faenza ware of Robbia and Bernard Galizzi—the rare workmanship of Cellini and Jean de Bologna were to him no more than the chasings of ordinary workers in metal—the precious manufactures of Limoges, of Sevres, and Dresden—the inimitable missals enriched by Julio Clovio, and Raffaele—the matchless glass, glowing

with the never-fading colours of Jean Cousin—the wonderful bronzes, the admirable marbles, the magnificent armour, and the costly decorations of various descriptions that filled every chamber—were of no more interest to him than the heaped up lumber of a Wardour-Street curiosity shop.

The house seemed to afford every phase of female loveliness. The Beauties of the Courts of England, France and Italy, for nearly three centuries, had smiled in their most becoming dresses—but a company that boasted of having found lovers in Kings, Princes, and Grand Dukes, could not divert the attention of a humble scholar: those graces which had been immortalized by Holbein and Janet, Vasari and Vandyke, Mignard, Lely, Kneller, Jarvis, Eckhardt, Richardson, Reynolds, and a score more of less fashionable limners, were, in his estimation, of no account, in comparison with a mere drawing by some artist whose name apparently had

been too obscure to demand the slightest attempt at preservation.

Wonderful, it may be thought, must have been the attractions that left the spectator indifferent among Ninon de l'Enclos, Bianca Capella, the innumerable Venuses of Louis le Grand and Charles the Second, and the Gunnings, the Waldegraves, and the Berrys—the more respectable beauties of a more respectable age: wonderful indeed they were. At the earliest opportunity he returned to the portrait. Admiration was now mingled with curiosity. It was strange that where every face possessed a name, and some a biography, the most charming of them all should have found no other record than the equally brief and unsatisfactory “Portrait of a Lady”—that legend sacred to Royal-Academy inanities, in Court dresses and opera mantles, and British-Artist vulgarities in satin and point lace.

He was ultimately so fortunate as to enlist the services of an elderly person, whom



he believed to be one of the auctioneer's *employés*. Whether he was broker, antiquary, picture-dealer, or bookseller, the author could not satisfy himself; for, with the jargon of all these trades, his conversation gave evidence of as intimate an acquaintance with pursuits that had not the least connection with either of them. He wore a loose over-coat, of a fashion nearly half a century the antecedent of Paletots and Taglionis, over an equally loose and rusty suit of black, that seemed to possess an extraordinary number of pockets, into the depths of which the wearer's hand frequently dived during his discourse, for what seemed a most singular form of illustration.

He talked of auctions, and he made a plunge into one side of his great coat, and brought forth a bundle of cuttings from newspapers of various dates, of accounts of all the celebrated sales that had taken place during the last century. From auctions he

insensibly glided to exhibitions, and lo! from another depth came an equally formidable heap, respecting all the public entertainments of London, for a similar period. Shakspeare of course was started; and the lucubrations of the editors of a dozen papers, in the shape of a third bundle, saw the light. Shakspeare led to Garrick—Garrick to Junius—Junius to Wilkes, and Wilkes to Walpole; and at every change came forth its appropriate heap of printed slips, from side pocket, back, breast, and half a dozen other places, the exact position of which it is not so easy to indicate; and they came forth as naturally as though forming a necessary part of the discourse.

Had the subject been the voyage of Jonah, or the Siege of Troy, the building of Solomon's Temple, or the apotheosis of the Man in the Moon, doubtless a supply of the same familiar *excerptæ* would have been as readily produced.

Not without hope that his companion

might have led his industrious scissors in the direction of anonymous portraits, the author directed his attention to the fair unknown that had so deeply interested him; but for once his capacious pockets remained undisturbed, and as though wanting the material which supported his conversation, he became singularly uncommunicative. He, however, unceremoniously made use of a privilege, the which, as he was allowed to exercise it unchallenged, proved his influence or confidential position. He took down the picture for a nearer examination. There was nothing on its surface, and on a cursory examination there appeared as little on the back, likely to enlighten either of them; but on a more rigid scrutiny, and after carefully wiping away the dust, some characters became legible, which at last the author made out to consist of the following words, written in a small Italian hand:—

*"Boame, 1740.*

*Arabella Falkland,*

*To Horace Walpole."*

The discoverer turned to inform his companion of his good fortune; but he had disappeared. He looked round and beheld him at a distance, engaged in what appeared a most confidential discourse with a Minister of State, well known for his taste in art and literature. It was evident by the bundle he was in the act of producing from one of his multitudinous pockets, that he was too satisfactorily occupied to care to be disturbed.

The portrait was replaced, after it had afforded the most convincing evidence that it contained no other record of the beautiful original or of her history. Another earnest survey of those bright features subjected the author, more than ever, to the influence of that tender eloquence which flashed so irresistibly from beneath her silken lashes.

There was something in that brief inscription which seemed to confirm what the touching expression of the face suggested.

The more he regarded this interesting portrait, the more the imagination employed itself in speculations concerning the fair creature it represented. He could not but fancy that he had arrived at what might be styled "a great fact" in his personal history, which had escaped the vigilance of even the ablest of the Walpole commentators; and that he had obtained an insight into the character of the retired statesman, which ought to invest the walls of "Strawberry Hill" with more romance than ever existed within those of the Castle of Otranto.

These speculations have shaped themselves into a continuous narrative, in which the best read scholar will find some things stated of which he can have no previous knowledge. The author is not without a hope that this prospect of novelty will be deemed a recommendation; but he is well aware, that the story contains too many appeals to the reader's patience, to render

him over-sanguine as to the result of an advantage so equivocal. Merely begging it to be understood that, notwithstanding its title, his work is to be regarded rather as an illustration of the founder of the structure so designated, than of the place which must always be classed among the most popular of his works, he leaves "Strawberry Hill" to the indulgence of those who may be induced to read its pages.



# STRAWBERRY HILL.

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## CHAPTER I.

### A CONTESTED ELECTION.

“ HURRAH for Walpole !”

“ Walpole and the Constitution !”

“ No Walpole !” “ No Placeman !” “ No  
Hanover Rats !”

“ Briggs for ever !”

Such were the most prominent, among an infinite number of very opposite exclamations, that burst from the well practised

throats of a very noisy portion of that multitudinous firm, Messrs. Tag, Rag, and Bobtail, whilst, as usual, they were playing the double part of actors and spectators in a contested election. For it so happens that the free people of England are in the habit of making extremely free when about exercising that invaluable feature in their freedom, the privilege of electing a fit and proper person to be their representative in the Imperial Parliament; and at the period to which we are referring—about the middle of the last century—this privilege, judging from the use made of it, was being exercised to its fullest extent, and with the most intense appreciation of its advantages.

A certain obscure little market town in Cornwall was then in the full enjoyment of the Saturnalia with which its population celebrated the occasion of contributing their quota to the legislative wisdom of the country; and by a very singular coincidence it so happened, that this preparation for making



the laws was always considered the best possible opportunity for breaking them. At such a time a great deal was sure to be heard respecting free and enlightened Englishmen, liberty and patriotism, which, as soon became manifest, was capable of but one interpretation, and this formed the discreditable triad—drunkenness, bribery, and bloodshed.

The town shewed signs of activity similar to those exhibited by a hive of bees, thrown into extraordinary commotion by being suddenly upset. Flags of all hues and sizes, joined with a liberal supply of laurel-leaves, flowers, and ribbons, waved from every window, giving the whole street an extremely parti-coloured aspect—as though the good people thought they required a suit of motley to express how completely they were playing the fool.

There were not wanting a sufficient number of figures to give life to the architecture of the place; for every window was crowded

with parties drinking, smoking, singing, and shouting—sometimes, it seemed, for their own satisfaction only—sometimes, when the casement was closer to the ground, to the satisfaction of the equally restless, equally noisy, and much more mischievous crowd below.

Now and then there would be a rush to the windows, to behold a passing procession, headed by a blustering drum and a couple of squeaking fifes—the military band in attendance upon a regiment of truculent looking heroes, in very dirty coats, and still dirtier linen, sporting with the same easy dignity their cudgels and their colours, and giving the most unequivocal demonstrations that they were as full of patriotism as of beer. Over their heads waved a prodigious banner, displaying the colours of one of the candidates, with a motto equally characteristic; and every now and then this was waved in a manner that very much excited the raptures of that heroic assembly, and also very much threatened the eyes of those

who chanced to be within reach of its unsteady supporters.

Many an encouraging sound came from the groups at one or the other of the capacious bow-windows, whence mugs of beer would occasionally be thrust forth to refresh the energies of some popular leader. It would so occur, however, that at other houses, where a different coloured ribbon happened to be sported, the only recognition the noisy vagabonds received came from some reckless opponent, in the shape of a cutting jibe, or a contemptuous exclamation. Lucky was the wight if he escaped with a handful of mud in his face; but usually such an interruption was the signal for the commencement of hostilities; the house was attacked, and in as little time as is taken to describe it, every pane of glass smashed to atoms. The row brought down the forces of the opposite party, cudgels began to play, heads to break, "Walpole for ever!" was shouted as fiercely as some hundred throats,

hoarse with bawling and drunk with beer, could shout, and was answered as fiercely by shrieks of "Briggs for ever!" in quite as drunken and as discordant a chorus.

One of the contending forces would, after a while, give way, closely followed by their victorious opponents, leaving over the well-contested field a score or two of disabled followers, who lost little time in endeavouring to get their broken heads tinkered at the nearest surgeon's. The place left vacant would then be filled by a couple of stentorian ballad-singers, chaunting some election squib bitterly commenting upon one of the candidates. Another crowd would soon collect, the jest would be received with vociferous applause by one party, and with ill-concealed hostility by the other. Something was sure to be said by the Blues, to which the Yellows were not inclined to submit—the ballad singers were shoved into the gutter—the cudgels were again in play—more heads were broken, more plasters were applied for,

and, in due time, once more the street was allowed an interval of quiet.

Such was the state of Callington in the year of our Lord 1741; and having given some description of the sort of constituency that were exercising their franchise, it is necessary we should be equally faithful in our delineation of the candidates who severally desired to be their representative. These consisted of two—and persons more diametrically opposed to each other, there was scarcely a possibility of finding throughout the three kingdoms.

The popular candidate was a Mr. Jonathan Briggs, by his familiars commonly called “Jolly Jonathan;” a heavy, clumsy, broad-faced and large-limbed owner, or rather part-owner, of a productive copper mine that was worked in the neighbourhood—affording employment to a vast number of the very hard-working, big-fisted, coarse-featured, clumsy-limbed, inhabitants of the district. His ample shoulders were encased in a coat



of coarse broad-cloth, that appeared to have been made in those days of remote history in which we are assured there were giants; and the buttons, that might upon an emergency have done duty as saucepan lids, corresponded with the dimensions of the cuffs, the skirts, and the other portions of this voluminous piece of drapery.

The waistcoat, of crimson cloth, embroidered at the edges, was only slightly less liberal in its dimensions than the coat—for it reached very nearly to the knees of his serviceable buck-skin breeches, within an inch or so of the yellow worsted hose, that seemed to keep the wearer's fleshy legs in a state of the most covetable comfort. A full wig, a clumsy three-cornered hat, and a pair of heavy broad-toed shoes, fastened with large silver buckles, completed his costume.

Such was the outward man of "Jolly Jonathan." Imagine such a man, totally devoid of that part of education then known by the name of "breeding,"—that is

to say, as rough, unpolished, and rude, as a Cornish mine-owner, of some fifty years of age, could be in the middle of the eighteenth century—downright, independent, prejudiced, and fearless, and with no pretensions to any talent, beyond that persevering industry which had raised him from an humble origin to opulence. A man who united in himself every possible description of opposite characteristics—a hearty lover of freedom, yet a tyrant in the exercise of his wealth—a sound Protestant, yet a secret well-wisher to the Catholic Prince of the Stuart family then in exile,—and a bitter enemy to the whole tribe of creatures in power, yet quite willing to join in ousting them from their places to make way for men whose government was likely to be a great deal more difficult to bear.

When we say that Jonathan Briggs was bigoted, obstinate, prejudiced, and extremely ignorant, we shall have little more to add to make the portrait complete; but

we must not forget to give him credit for perfect honesty of purpose. Man or boy, Jolly Jonathan would have scorned sailing under false colours—he never concealed his detestation of the Whigs—nay, he had resolved to contest the election of his native town with the son of the all-powerful minister, Sir Robert Walpole, to afford himself an opportunity for declaring, more fully than he had ever been able to do at the weekly meetings of the highly respectable Club at the Red Lion, of which he had been chairman for the last twenty years, that intense detestation he had always felt for their principles—after the entrance of the third bowl of punch.

His opponent was a young man of slight figure and pale complexion, dressed very elegantly in a claret-coloured coat, embroidered to the bottom and at the cuffs; a rich satin vest elaborately flowered; velvet breeches and fine cotton stockings, with shoes covering the instep, where each was



fastened with a silver buckle; delicate ruffles at his wrists, a light sword at his side, and his hair powdered, tied behind, and surmounted by a richly-trimmed hat of the last fashion, proclaimed him a beau of the year 1741.

There were many other points of dissimilitude between them, besides dress. The younger candidate had received the benefit of a classical education; had enjoyed his Virgil and his cricket-match at Eton; had had the advantages of Euclid and cock-fighting at Cambridge; since when, he had still further enriched his mind by foreign travel, having journeyed from Paris to Rome with a very different result from what was experienced by the less fortunate tourist who travelled from Dan to Beersheba—for he had gathered as he went a tolerable collection of coins and scandal, medals and *bon mots*, old pictures, new opera tunes, and the best authenticated modern antiques; with jests, anecdotes, satires and lampoons in great va-

riety, and every thing necessary to set up a man of fashion as a virtuoso and a wit. There was a melancholy expression in those pale and thoughtful features, that gave the impression of one rushing upon a desperate enterprise to escape from the pressure of feelings too painful to be tolerated,—as though the young adventurer sought in the tumult of politics, oblivion of some misfortune that had overtaken him elsewhere. Nevertheless there was a smile upon his lip. A world of cutting ridicule and biting sarcasm lurked in that smile. It was evident that he strove to conceal the bitterness of his feelings under cover of a jest.

Such was Horace Walpole, the third son of Sir Robert Walpole, at the opening of our story, in the zenith of his fame as a powerful minister and an able statesman—in the zenith too of his unpopularity, as the inventor of innumerable imposts, and a favourer of monopolies, standing armies, despotic laws, and Hanoverian interests.

As we have said, of the two, the former was the popular candidate; but then his opponent had many powerful recommendations—he had all the government interest—he was supported by the noblemen and gentlemen of the neighbourhood who held the greatest influence, and was possessed of many qualifications for the office he sought, to which the uneducated mine-owner could have no pretensions.

We must now venture to carry the reader with us to the hustings, in the presence of a boisterous mob of Cornish miners, agricultural labourers, and a vast mass of the humbler classes of the population of the town and neighbourhood, with a banner or other symbol of party here and there rising above their closely-packed heads, which was not unfrequently of such an insulting nature, as to excite commotions that placed both the symbol and its bearer in very considerable jeopardy.

The hustings was a platform raised in

the most open part of the town, at a sufficient elevation to allow those who were desirous of addressing "the free and enlightened electors," to be seen at any reasonable distance. At the present moment it seemed as crowded as though the town intended to supply the whole complement of members required for the business of legislation, instead of limiting its quota to one.

A considerable degree of speechifying had been going on, of that peculiar kind in demand on such occasions.

Mr. Jonathan Briggs was proposed and seconded by his staunch friends Captain Pincher and Orlando Budge, Esq.—the one a snappish sea captain, whose wooden leg secured him almost as much respect in his native town as his moderate pension; the other a retired draper, who, having inherited a considerable fortune from a distant relation, availed himself of every opportunity of pushing himself forward, un-

der the impression that his property gave him the right to consider himself—which he was extremely ambitious of being thought—“a public character.”

The proposer and seconder of the son of the Prime Minister were, as might be expected, very different personages—the first being the Right Hon. Lord Tremayne, of Tremayne Castle, a very great nobleman in Cornwall, a man even of some consequence in London, but of very limited capacity any where; and Sir Harry Pendives, Baronet, of Pendives Court, possessed of twenty thousand a year, a pack of fox-hounds, and a capacity which, where the bottle was concerned, would put to confusion the best head that ever sat upon a wise man’s shoulders.

Their orations had been spoken to an *ad libitum* accompaniment of interruptions of every description, from the ludicrous exclamation intended to raise a horse-laugh, to the less agreeable missile that might close



an eye or level a row of teeth, according as to whether the taste of the operator lay in the direction of damaged eyes or fractured masticators. These, however, were experimental demonstrations. The estimable constituents of Callington were too well aware of their duty to their country, to be prodigal of their cabbage-stumps to personages of such secondary interest.

A shout that must have "rent the skies," if they had not that day been made of particularly stout materials, arose in the air, as the well-known figure of Jolly Jonathan advanced to the front of the hustings, bearing in one of his prodigious hands the long clay pipe with which he had been regaling himself while waiting his turn to speak. It was evident Jonathan did not want friends—and very vociferous friends they were—but then it may as well be known that their "most sweet voices" were justly his due, inasmuch as he had paid the very handsome sum of two shillings a-head,



and beer *à discretion*, for the very respectable row in his favour they were then creating.

Mr. Briggs began his oration with that free-and-easy assurance that might have been expected from so practised an orator at the Red Lion. He commenced by explaining his desire to become the Representative of his native town, and his qualifications for such an office. His language was particularly homely, with which it must be acknowledged his manners completely corresponded. For him Lord Chesterfield had lived in vain; and though justice compels us to say that this could not be said of Lindley Murray, it was simply because, as yet, Lindley Murray had not lived at all.

It was a practice in the feudal times for the warder of a castle, before he entered into a parley with any one approaching the gates, to "blow his horn." To this chivalrous fashion the stalwart mine-owner had recourse, in a manner as singular as it was

picturesque, as soon as he began to find that his communications with the many headed mass before him were not so rapid as he desired. A speckled blue cotton handkerchief was hawled from the depths of his capacious pocket, directly he felt himself at a loss for an idea, into the folds of which his nose sunk like a best bower anchor into a mud bank; and having perpetrated a flourish that must have been heard by the most distant of his audience, he took up the thread of his discourse as if it had got disentangled by the extraordinary exertions he had made to clear his head.

Though some specimen of his rhetorical powers may be expected from us, we are afraid we are not capable of doing them justice, for most assuredly his was a species of oratory of which we have no examples, either amongst the philippics of Demosthenes or the orations of Cicero.

“Friends and countrymen,” continued the candidate, his face like a peony under a

broiling sun, “brave and enlightened Englishmen—men worthy of the glorious name of free-born Britons,—victory is certain if you shews yourselves worthy of it. Let every one what has a vote lose no time in registering it in my favour. Remember my principles! Remember the ground I stands upon!”

Here a stentorian voice, in a scarcely intelligible Cornish dialect, acquainted the orator that there was no fear of that being forgotten, as long as the plank on which his honour’s feet rested remained visible.

“Remember,” continued the speaker, after the laugh had subsided, “we are not slaves, but Britons.” The distinction was not explained. “Remember our rights, our liberties, our”—Here the orator dived into the recesses of his blue pennant, with an effect that prodigiously startled an old dame in an opposite balcony, who looked as if apprehensive of an earthquake.

“Never forget who are the enemies of the

people," he recommenced, with additional energy, "never forget who are your friends. Rest assured that if I am to be your member, I am determined to do everything for every body."

At this extremely liberal announcement, the cheering appeared unanimous; but it was turned to as unanimous a laugh, when a ragged fellow on a neighbouring sign-post asked the candidate to lend him five shillings; adding, he wouldn't say a word about *the rest of the guinea*, till his honour was in Parliament.

"One more word, and I have done," continued the orator; "I cannot entertain a moment's doubt as to the result of this contest. Slavery and chains are not to the taste of the free and enlightened voters of this borough."

The free and enlightened voters expressed their concurrence in this opinion, in a manner that at least proved the soundness of their lungs.

“Hasten to the poll!” cried the candidate. “I look for every man’s vote, what has the feelings of a patriot, and knows how to act like one. The eyes of the whole country are upon you—fail not to shew that you are worthy of the high opinion the world has of your public spirit, and ever bear in mind the glorious cause for which we are struggling—the cause for which Russell died on the field, and Hampden perished on the scaffold.”

Here the reader must be informed that Jolly Jonathan, like many other provincial orators, had a few pet phrases, of which he generally availed himself when desirous of producing a great effect. With regard to the blundering reference to the two patriots just mentioned, though often set right, he had uttered the same words a thousand times, and could not be persuaded he was in error.

The speaker having as he fancied said enough for himself, now proceeded to attack his adversary. Hitherto, although it could



not be said that he had had it all his own way, the interruptions from the mob had been anything but hostile; but directly he ventured to mention his rival disparagingly, the strength of the Walpole party made itself manifest in a manner neither agreeable, nor altogether unattended with danger. Groans, hisses, and shouts of derision, accompanied him in every paragraph. The vociferous cheering however of his own partizans encouraged him to proceed.

It soon appeared as though a particular portion of the mob were bent upon applying their own punctuation to their townsman's eloquence. A comma would come in the shape of a cabbage-stump—a rotten apple did the duty of a semicolon—a colon found an excellent equivalent in a couple of addled eggs—and ultimately a dead cat fulfilled the service of a full stop, by knocking the orator off his legs, and tumbling him into the arms of his staunch friends, Captain Pincher and Orlando Budge, Esq.



The other candidate now presented himself—attended by his noble proposer and wealthy fox-hunting friend—with apparently, in the background, a guard of honour composed of his principal supporters.

His appearance would have been the prelude to a general row, on the part of the infuriated partizans of Briggs, had not the air of fashion with which he proffered his bow, as he advanced in front of the hustings, and the very gentlemanlike cut and quality of his garments, made a powerful impression in his favour. The sturdy Cornishmen were well aware that he was a son of the unpopular minister, and that his political principles were diametrically opposed to whatever they considered liberal; but the most ignorant were as well aware he had just returned from “foreign parts,” and they chose to employ some few minutes of personal observation, before they would venture upon an expression of their sentiments respecting him.

While the universal curiosity was being gratified, the object of it, with ready tact, took advantage of the silence to gain a hearing. Instead of indulging in the customary common-places of election speeches, the candidate thought proper, and had taken wonderful pains in the matter, to prepare an oration of so extremely classic a character, as to do credit to his Etonian studies and Cambridge reflections. It was in the highest degree amusing to notice the effect produced on his uneducated Cornish audience, by the marvellous display of scholarship that was presented to them. It cannot be said, that those who had "come to scoff remained to pray," but assuredly it appeared as if those who had come to pelt, remained to listen. In exchange for the cut-and-dried phrases, with which, time out of mind, their votes had been cajoled, their ears were regaled with sentences worthy of the groves of Academe, teeming with careful scholarship, and overflowing with classical allusion.

The stalwart miner, instead of disposing of his ready missile, stood with open mouth and wondering eyes, while the fluent speaker was rhapsodizing on Spartan liberty. Scraps of mellifluous Greek found their way to the untutored ear of the boor, who dropped his turnip and scratched his head in the intensity of his mystification. The ragged mechanics tried to look as little puzzled as possible at every reference to the Areiopagites, to ostracism, and to other marvellous features in Athenian politics, which the young candidate had chosen to mention so familiarly; and the honest tradesman, who knew about as much of Greek history as of the Man-in-the-Moon, listened to the anecdote of Harmodius and Aristogiton, with an impression on his mind that he had never been so astonished in his life.

But having secured their attention, the sagacious orator launched out into a wider field—a field that seemed to embrace every thing, from the Trojan war to the conquest

of Jerusalem—a heterogeneous medley of strange names and stranger ideas, that made the wisest of his hearers as much at fault as though he had just dropped into a new planet. Even his opponent, who was just recovering from the rough salute that had so summarily disposed of his eloquence, and who thought so highly of his own wisdom, found himself completely bothered by the hard names that kept rushing from the mouth of the speaker, like a swarm of ants from their violated nest.

Captain Pincher, who, when anything was uttered before him that was beyond his comprehension, was always disposed to resent it as a reflection upon his understanding, now found so much to quarrel with, that it became an absolute impossibility to know where to begin. His coadjutor looked equally indignant. He felt himself in a fog, and with the prophetic instinct of persons of his class, entertained a misgiving that the speaker was making a fool of him.

Lord Tremayne smiled—a never-failing resource when his Lordship felt himself at a loss. He wanted to shew that the very classical oration of the Prime Minister's son was thoroughly appreciated. Sir Harry Pendives frowned; he had waited to hear his young friend explain his views in favour of the country gentlemen, with especial reference to bringing before Parliament some new law for the preservation of foxes; but in his ideas the orator had evidently lost the scent, and seemed to be saying what was as much to the purpose as an anniversary sermon at a hunting carouse.

The novelty of the thing had done wonders. The mob had been taken by surprise, and, satisfied that there must be something more than ordinary in so very puzzling a discourse, ventured to applaud whenever the speaker paused for breath. This encouraged others to follow their example, till the more extravagant he became, the more vociferous grew the cheers of his audience; and



when he concluded with a peroration made up of such an extraordinary confusion of ideas, as to render the rest of the strange address intelligible in comparison, the plaudits became so long and so loud, that in the memory of the oldest polling-clerk there had never been heard a speech which had been half so well received.

The reader, therefore, will not be very greatly surprised to learn, that when the Sheriff called for a show of hands, the supporters of the younger candidate outnumbered the other party ten to one; and when a poll was demanded by the disconcerted Briggs, the shouts of "Walpole for ever!" so aggravated his diminished followers, that they commenced an attack upon their opponents with all their forces. A fierce contest was the result. Banners waved and cudgels played—the party shouts presently became the war cries of two desperate armies—the mass of Cornish heads that filled the space before the hustings, exhibited as much



commotion as the sea on their own rough coast, in the wildest storm that ever visited the Land's End; and screams, groans, and hisses arose from all directions simultaneously with a shower which apparently had never been equalled in the singularity of its elements, save on the occasion of that oft quoted phenomenon, when it rained "cats, dogs, and pitch-forks."

But it was the last belligerent effort of the unfortunate "Blues;" their hopes were destroyed and their heads broken. If they were not thrashed to their heart's content, by the triumphant "Yellows," marvellous indeed must have been the extent of castigation that would have satisfied them.

## CHAPTER II.

## CHAIRING THE MEMBER.

THERE was a very dull meeting in the club-room at the Red Lion. That capacious chamber which had so long beheld the assemblies of "The Free and United True Blues of the Borough of Callington," and had resounded with the eloquence of its perpetual president, the melody of its honorary secretary, and the mirth of its venerated treasurer, was now turned into a committee-room. Its ranges of windows left with

scarcely a whole pane—its extensive floor littered with broken glass, brickbats, cabbage-stumps, and dead cats—a heap of tattered banners lying in one corner—fragments of placarded boards heaped in another—whilst one portion of the room, near the door, was crowded with a very vagabond-looking lot of fellows, with tattered garments bespattered with mud, and heads tied up with blood-stained cloths, or covered with plasters, which told quite as plainly as their dismal visages, that the election was far from going on as favourably as their candidate could have desired.

There was a long table in the centre of the room, bearing, besides a punch-bowl and glasses, tobacco and pipes, an assortment of business-like looking books, writing materials, and a mass of printed papers, in which the words, “Vote for Briggs,” might be read at a considerable distance. At one end of the table, in his chair of office, sat the clumsy figure of Jolly Jonathan.

But who could have recognized him with that chap-fallen countenance! Where was the ever-smiling benignity of the perpetual president? Where the ready cut-and-dried eloquence of the practised chairman? What could have transformed his peony countenance into that unwholesome mass of blue and yellow, that, unwashed, unshaven, with disarranged neckcloth and dusty coat, seemed to sit so uncomfortably under his disordered wig?

His feelings were evidently too intense for language—indeed he made it apparent that they were too intense for any thing but the contents of the punch-bowl before him, which, through the agency of a silver ladle and a capacious glass, disappeared down his throat with as much method as though the arrangement was produced by machinery.

At the other end of the table sat Captain Pincher, shewing his teeth like an angry bull-dog, and talking as pugnaciously as though he intended to fight the whole town

by sections, and cared very little if he began with his very particular friends around him.

Orlando Budge, Esq., looked as much sympathy as he could contrive to throw into his batter-pudding physiognomy. He was well aware that one public character ought to feel for another; and, not knowing how soon it might be his own turn to endure a similar disappointment, he exhibited the intensity of his sympathy, by applying, as diligently as his friend, to the source of consolation he had selected.

They had been drinking many hours. Mr. Budge felt, that if he sympathised in this way much longer, he should be in a condition to require sympathy for himself. He perceived the four corners of the room running a race, with a speed that was to him dreadfully alarming; and once or twice he was under the necessity of rubbing his eyes, to ascertain, as clearly as possible, whether there were not two candidates in the room instead of one.



Around the table reclined, in various reflective attitudes, the members of the committee; some leaning forward, with both elbows on the table—some leaning back, with their heads resting on their hands—a few meditating with crossed arms and bent brows, and others absorbed, as it were, in a philosophical study of their finger-nails. They were chiefly tradesmen of the town, sufficiently well to do to be able to walk into the Red Lion and call for their glass, and pay, when demanded, their subscription, as members of “The Free and United True Blues of the Borough of Calington.”

There were the sturdy Hodge Mealman, the miller, and the flashy Dick Sweetwort, the brewer; there were Old Bricks, the builder, and Young Bricks, the tanner; there were Dips, the Chandler, Chips, the carpenter, and Wollopall, the schoolmaster of the Grammar-school. These were people as well known as the sign over the door of the old-



fashioned inn where they were in the habit of passing their evenings.

We have now only to bring under review one more personage. A short ill-made little fellow, in an old wig a mile too big for him, sitting on a chair with his legs crossed under the seat, diligently casting up long columns of figures, in what appeared to be the polling-books that had been used by Briggs's committee. He was seen with pen in one hand, and a large glass of hot gin-and-water in the other, mounting up each monstrous column; the point of the pen resting on the figures in succession, as though they formed a numerical ladder, till he had achieved the top, when calling out the result, as the sum should be placed at the bottom of the page, he took a copious draught of the steaming Geneva, and began to add up the next column.

Whether it was that the number of figures was too much for his calculating powers, or his vision had become affected by the quan-

tity of spirit with which he had thought proper to refresh himself during his labours, it is certain that his result of the state of the poll, according to his calculation, as much surprised the committee as himself. But the assistance of the schoolmaster having been called, the large majority of the drunken poll-clerk was speedily changed to a most humiliating minority.

Captain Pincher denounced the clerk in very savage terms, and seemed inclined to disallow the correctness of his arithmetic, when a tremendous uproar in the street drew off the attention of the committee, and in an instant every one rushed to the broken windows to behold what was going on. Martial music filled the air, accompanied by shouts so loud as to bring the conviction that the whole population assisted in producing them. Nearer approached the tumult—flags and banners waved proudly over the heads of what seemed an incalculable multitude. What it meant, not one of

the Free and United True Blues appeared to be aware.

The procession came near enough to enable the puzzled committee men to ascertain its nature and its object. The inscriptions on the flags, and the continuous shouts, prepared them for the overpowering truth. The next object that met their gaze was the last drop to the brimming cup of vexation the ambitious Briggs had been made to imbibe—*They were chairing the successful candidate.* Horace Walpole was Member for the Borough of Callington. It was all over with the True Blues. The hated Yellows had gained the victory.

The procession stopped under the windows of the Red Lion—we should have said the frames: “Walpole for ever!” cried a smart young fellow in the Walpole livery, in a state of frantic excitement, waving his cocked hat over his head. Three loud cheers proclaimed the triumph of the Walpolites over their opponents.

This was too much for poor Briggs, and equally too much for his friends. The perpetual president sank back in the arms of the faithful treasurer, who was equally overpowered either by his functions or his feelings; and it was not till the next sun shone, and their heads began to recover from the extent of their potations, that they found themselves sufficiently masters of their own actions to believe they should ever be able to hold up their heads again in their native town.

We will not attempt to describe the extravagant rejoicings with which the frantic Walpolites celebrated their victory. The worthy electors of Callington appeared as irrational as free and enlightened electors ought to be who had been made so very drunk, and had been bribed so very handsomely. At the period we are seeking to illustrate, the value of votes was much better understood than it appears to be at present, and the appreciation of

voters, both by themselves and their candidates, was consequently at an amazing quotation.

It was a subject of much rejoicing in this Cornish constituency, that their candidate had the advantage of Government influence and Treasury resources. It was obvious that the son of such a minister as Sir Robert Walpole, ought to be returned by them. His committee did not fall short of their expectations: and the final state of the poll proved how well they had done the business of the state, in securing the return of a supporter of the Government, and how readily the electors had responded to the unanswerable appeal that had been made to them, by electing him as their representative.

But it may be asked, how did their member receive honours so new to him? When enjoying the noisy hospitality of the magnates of the borough—when once more lauded to the skies by the somewhat overzealous but not too sensible Lord Tremayne,



of Tremayne Castle, and “tallyho’d!” by the blunt and boisterous Sir Harry Pendives, of Pendives Court—did not his pale cheek glow with animation, and his heart throb with pleasure?

A tinge of colour had given warmth to his pallid complexion—the pulses of his heart were unusually disturbed; but the cause of neither of these effects existed in his satisfaction at his present position.

He felt himself to be the sport of two opposing influences. To allow the exercise of one, was to menace the existence of the other. His new honours might elevate him in the opinion of one whose regard, though he had found it so difficult to attain, he coveted above all human gifts; he knew they would be regarded as badges of disgrace by another, whose esteem had once been—apparently still was—the most prized of earthly distinctions. His heart beat tumultuously as he thought of the career now opening to his ambition; but he blushed as



the humiliating suggestion was presented to his mind, whether it might not be said, in a different quarter, that he had made himself a tool to be put to any discreditable use that might be found for it.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE WALPOLE FAMILY.

HORACE WALPOLE was a Member of Parliament. How ardently he had longed for this distinction, it is in vain to attempt to describe. His position was far from being a covetable one, though it was one, the disadvantages of which others experienced as well as himself. He was *a younger son*, and had to endure an unusual amount of a younger son's humiliations.

At an early age he had been made to feel

his want of consequence at the domestic hearth. His father, absorbed in the war of politics, had little time to devote to cultivating the affections of his children. He was a statesman—he forgot he was also a parent. Sir Robert Walpole knew that his place was at the head of the councils of his sovereign, and that he had enough to do to maintain it. He could not afford a thought for home. He was immersed in the business of the country. Besides the rivalry of foreign states, which was always sufficiently menacing, he had to guard against foes more dangerous, that he knew but too well existed in his own land.

The second sovereign of the House of Hanover sat upon the British throne. The nation, to be sure, were in a better humour with his rule than they had been with that of his father. George the Second had shewn *some* sympathy with England, though much more Hanoverian in his feelings than was agreeable to the mass of his British sub-

jects; but they were well aware that the expatriated Stuarts were still in existence, and there was a sufficient number of them dissatisfied with the present state of things, or prejudiced in favour of the royal exiles, to give a minister considerable uneasiness, should any event occur to put it in the power of either of such claimants to contest their forfeited throne with its present possessor.

Sir Robert knew very well that the most active intrigues were in force, in more than one of the Continental courts, to plunge the British islands into a rebellion; and was quite as well aware that the *ruse* of denouncing the son of James II. as “a Pretender,” did very little service to the Hanoverian cause. His measures were of a much more active nature. He was indefatigable in counteracting the influence of the Jacobites in foreign courts, and in preventing their becoming formidable to him in England.

But this was far from being all his task-work. He found that a powerful party existed in what he might consider his own camp, the object of which was to deprive him of his covetable position, as the responsible ruler of the country. Party feuds ran high in both houses of Parliament, and the able statesman was hated and feared by envious friends as much as by the most hostile of his political enemies. To guard himself against the machinations of both open and concealed foes, was another great item in his multitudinous labours.

With so much upon his hands, notwithstanding the absolute claims of flesh and blood, it cannot be considered extraordinary, that the harassed minister should appear a careless husband and a neglectful father; yet it could not be said that he was either unkind or unfeeling.

We incline to the opinion that a minister should have no affections—that sentiment cannot assimilate with diplomacy—that do-

mestic happiness is incompatible with statesmanship. Indeed we think that a youth vowed to the State should be like one in Catholic countries vowed to the Church—he should be devoted to a life of celibacy. If it come to pass that a situation should be advertised as vacant for the First Lord of the Treasury, it should invariably be stated, as it often is in much humbler vocations, that the candidate should be “without encumbrances.”

How is it possible for one who hath the destinies of a nation in his hands, to give his attention to the bringing up of little boys and girls? How can he turn from the concoction of a royal speech to the consideration of a schoolboy's wants and wishes—leave a declaration of war, to notice a young lady's improvement in fancy work; or take off his attention from granting subsidies to foreign states, to pay the demands of lesson-giving fashionable musicians and dancing-masters?



But though Horace Walpole had seen little of his father, he had heard a great deal of him; and the reports that reached him of his greatness produced early in his mind a powerful impression, which, combined with the very unusual enjoyment of being in his presence, excited a wonderful degree of reverence and devotion.

Possibly maternal affection might have modified his peculiar idiosyncrasy; but he had lost his mother some years since, and shortly afterwards gained another by his father's second marriage with a lady who had previously been his mistress. This new connection, as might be supposed, did not better his condition.

Thus, as it were on the threshold of manhood, our hero was forced to concentrate his attention on his remaining parent; and it was singular to observe the impressions that had been produced in his boyhood, influencing his mind with such intensity as completely to direct his career.

He became more sensible of the ambitious position of his father as the confidential adviser of his Sovereign, the chief director of the Government, as well as the dispenser of a vast share of its patronage; and a peculiar feeling of devotion to him took possession of his nature, which not all the slights he was made to feel—as much through his comparative unimportant position in the family as a younger son, as from the domestic deficiencies of the engrossed minister—could diminish in the slightest degree:

Sir Robert Walpole now led a bachelor life—he was growing old, but he appeared determined to enjoy to the utmost what was left of his existence, and the minister's extreme conviviality astonished both friends and enemies. His son Horace continually heard the most extraordinary accounts of his parent's endearing manners and jovial disposition; and it seemed hard to him that he, his child, should have no share in a heart that appeared to be thrown open to all the

world. The same post that brought him intelligence of the boundless hospitality of his paternal home, brought him a formal intimation that he was to prepare for finishing his education with the Grand Tour.

As he paced his quiet chambers at Cambridge, where this resolution—written in the frigid style of a communication from a superior to a humble subordinate—had found him, young Walpole entered into one of those romantic determinations which not unfrequently seize upon the minds of very young men, possessed of more than ordinary sensibility. With his heart yearning towards his illustrious parent, he instantly took measures to transport himself out of the country whose destinies at that moment seemed so completely in that parent's hands; and at once gave up every hope of seeing for an indefinite time, the approving smile that appeared to him to be the most covetable of human enjoyments.

It is not our purpose to follow the young

traveller along the route that had previously been chalked out for him, though a tour through France and Italy a hundred years ago was not quite the common-place journey it has now become. Suffice it to say, that he never for a moment forgot the feelings that bound him to his country and to his home—that his father's honour and greatness were ever the first objects of his thoughts; and that he continually sought to obtain information that might be of service to him, which he contrived to forward to England, without affording the Minister any clue to the source whence it came.

All this time he affected a wonderful cheerfulness—wrote numberless letters abounding with pleasantries, and apparently had no thought in the world but to amuse himself and to improve his taste. He cultivated the friendship of two or three of his school-fellows with such assiduity, as ought to have satisfied any one that they afforded all the social pleasure his heart required.

In due time Horace Walpole returned to England. He could not avoid anticipating, during the last month of his travels, the gratification he should experience when permitted to enjoy his father's society. Though absent from England, he had, through his correspondence, obtained tolerably correct information of the state of parties at home; besides which, his own observations of many things that came within his cognizance relating to the prospects of the Pretender, whose family were residents in Italy, made him aware, to a considerable extent, of what was plotting by parties abroad. This knowledge gave him a more lively interest in Sir Robert Walpole and his proceedings. He seemed to share in his responsibilities, and feel his troubles. He experienced all the enthusiasm of a thorough partizan, joined to the devotion of the most affectionate of sons.

He had scarcely found himself domiciled in the town mansion of the Minister, who



was then keeping open house with his usual prodigality at his magnificent country mansion, Houghton, in Suffolk, when he had the mortification of receiving from his father a formal command to start for Cornwall immediately, as preparations were making to ensure him a seat in Parliament for the borough of Callington.

At first this was bitter enough; but after some time passed in allowing the current of excited sensibility to flow on unchecked, the cold tenor of the message was forgotten in the brilliant opening it gave for realizing those dreams of political ambition he had been so fond of encouraging under the soft skies of Italy; but not till after a dream a thousand times more seductive, to the glowing illusions of which he had abandoned every sense, had been most rudely disturbed. The result of the journey we have already related.



## CHAPTER IV.

## A YOUNGER SON.

“WELL, it was a prodigious good joke, I must allow,” said a rakish looking young gentleman, addressing a circle of men about his own age, evidently in a state of the highest good humour, who appeared to be taking their breakfast in a large room on the ground floor of Sir Robert Walpole’s official residence in Downing Street.

They were friends of Horace Walpole; nearly all could claim the reputation of “Wits,” and they had met to congratulate

him on his success: the wonderful classical oration that had produced such surprising effects in his favour had just been the cause of a vast expenditure of very hearty mirth.

The room in which they were sitting was one of considerable size, well furnished with bulky chairs boasting morocco seats; a dining-table of the largest dimensions; a massive side-board; and a series of fine full-length portraits of the Walpole family. The table and side-board were spread with eatables of different kinds, from substantial joints of cold meat that appeared sufficient to satisfy the appetites of a regiment, to certain little delicacies fresh from the hand of the cook, that could have been intended only for those whose eating was on a much more limited scale. Amongst these good things, was a liberal display of coffee, chocolate, and tea, in handsome silver vessels, with a proportionate array of the usual furniture of the breakfast table.

They seemed a very happy party: much

happier than such antagonistic characters as "Wits" are reputed to be. They ate heartily, drank heartily, and laughed heartily; indulging in the last proceeding quite as much as in either of the other two. It was evident that they were under no restraint; for although an old servant in the Walpole livery waited upon them, the rosy gills, well-dressed wig, and ample corporation of Sir Robert's town butler were too familiar to them all to allow their possessor to act as a check upon their vivacity.

Indeed, Oswald was one of those privileged domestics who, from long service, or respect for their qualities, have been regarded as part of the family with whom they are found; and the butler of the Prime Minister was, in fact, a person of no small consequence in that house. He had saved sufficient money—for accumulating which, by the way, he had possessed singular advantages—to make his remaining in service a matter of perfect indifference to him; yet he

would as soon have thought of investing his savings, bribes, and the other "perquisites" of his place, in South Sea Stock, as of quitting the family.

In his eyes, Sir Robert Walpole was a greater man than King or Keyser—and, according to his ideas, his master's prodigious greatness reflected no slight portion of consequence upon himself. An ever-present feeling of this betrayed him into the exhibition of numberless singularities, that caused a good deal of amusement, without, however, diminishing the regard in which he was so generally held.

Oswald felt an unbounded reverence for his master, and he experienced an attachment of a warmer character to his younger son. He had noticed the neglect from which the boy had suffered in early life: noticing also his superior intelligence and many endearing qualities, he had been in the habit of shewing him all the good offices in his power; and his feelings in his favour had be-

come so powerful, now the neglected boy had become a man, that there was nothing practicable which the old man would not willingly have done to please him.

Probably, of all that merry breakfast party, Oswald was the merriest: yet he was the most attentive of attendants, recommending every delicacy on the well-covered table with an eloquence of the most persuasive kind; but the familiarity was so respectful, it could not have alarmed the prejudices of the most rigid respecer of the claims of birth.

There was one person in the room who was conspicuous, from the singular contrast presented to the laughing faces around, in a physiognomy that looked as if the possessor were either too sleepy to be conscious of what was then going forward, or too simple to appreciate the jests of his companions. Indeed, there was a demureness in his countenance that might readily have created the impression that he was out of place among his vivacious associates; whilst, on the con-



trary, his listless and drowsy manner gave him the appearance of having prolonged the overnight's gaieties till he had deprived himself of his natural rest.

The neatness of his dress, however, was at variance with the latter supposition. His complexion was colourless; but the smooth cheek and well-mown chin had evidently but recently received the advantage of a careful toilet. Not a curl in his wig was out of order; his lace cravat and ruffles were fresh from the laundress; there was not a stain upon the broad gold lace that faced his waistcoat which was buttoned up to the throat; his single-breasted Quaker-like coat was without a rumple, and his velvet breeches without a crease. In short, in his person he was far from betraying any of the ordinary signs of a young rake after a sleepless debauch.

It seemed, then, that he must be set down as one of those high-bred gentlemen—half simpleton, half saint—who are occasionally to be met with in gay circles, playing the

necessary part of *butt* to their ill-chosen associates. And this inference was much strengthened by a peculiar turning up of the whites of his eyes whenever he was roused out of his torpor to make a reply to a pertinacious questioner.

Yet it very soon became clear that if he was not a drowsy profligate, he most assuredly was not an unconscious *butt*: for those lips never opened except to utter some quaint remark, or relate some piquant anecdote, to the wit of which the listless manner and demure aspect of the speaker apparently gave irresistible poignancy; for the voice was rarely heard without eliciting a general laugh—a laugh, however, that never affected *him*—his torpor was immovable, his demureness stereotyped: as the report followed the flash of his wit, he turned up his eyes, and looked as unconscious of the jest, as though his features were as hard as those of “his grandsire cut in alabaster.”

This “sleeping partner,” as he might

have been called, of the firm of Wits collected in that apartment, was no other than George Selwyn, whose eccentricities of manner and quaintness of phrase were, even in these early days of his fame, making him one of the most fashionable men of his day.

“Yes, it was a jest that reflects as much credit upon those who used it as upon those who received it,” continued the speaker; “It argues a very enlightened constituency to appreciate so thoroughly so superior a piece of scholarship from a candidate for their suffrages.”

“Hanbury Williams, that is a monstrous logical conclusion,” observed another of the party. He was a youth of delicate complexion, and highly intellectual physiognomy; and had addressed a gentleman somewhat his senior in years, at the further end of the table, who chanced to be demolishing a pigeon pie, and smothering a laugh at the same time.

“For the address to the amazingly en-

lightened electors of the borough of Callington, it does not become me to say more of its supereminent merit than I possibly can help, seeing that I assisted in its composition," answered Sir Charles.

"Yes; Williams and Gray helped me with the poetical touches," said Horace Walpole, in the same humour, as he kept devouring a devilled chicken, with a relish that greatly delighted the attentive butler. "The fact is, my genius is a bird of such very noble feather, it will soar only in the highest regions of the sublime."

"Oh dear!" exclaimed George Selwyn, in his customary drowsy manner, "our friend's genius, I fear, is like a boy's kite—the more elevated it is, the less you see of it."

"It was all monstrous sublime and poetical too, I haven't a doubt," resumed another of the young men, after the laugh that followed the utterance of Selwyn's jest had subsided; "but always excepting the taste

of those Bæotian Callingtonians in classical eloquence, which, I must say, surprised me extremely."

"That admission ought to be prodigiously in their favour," observed Sir Charles, "for Montagu is a very astonishing fellow in his way, and therefore ought to be the less sensible of what is extraordinary in others. I remember I surprised him once—but then, as I have reason to believe, it was very late after dinner, when our eyes are not so easily open to starts and convulsions, as at a more sober hour of the day. The fact is, I had been drinking freely, at some fellow's of our acquaintance, and was quitting to return to my own domicile; my foot slipped on the stairs, and I tumbled from top to bottom. When I picked myself up, Montagu kindly expressed his *surprise* I had not broken my neck."

"Excepting their classical taste, let me say again," said Montagu, availing himself of a break in the storm of mirth that had



just passed over, "I think a mob of more illiterate, stupid, ignorant animals than your Cornwall constituents, I never saw in the whole course of my existence."

"By Jove, Horace, I wouldn't stand that!" exclaimed a young and very handsome military officer, sending his cup to be replenished; "remember, any reflection on the enlightened electors of Callington must be personal to their very enlightened representative."

"I should be the horriblest ungrateful wretch alive, Conway," replied Horace, in the same humour, "could I sit still and hear anything to the prejudice of a body of men who have honoured me with their confidence, and whom in return I cannot help regarding as possessing a degree of judgment and sagacity very much in advance of their cotemporaries."

The exclamations, the affected coughing, and the mocking laugh that followed the last speech, prevented the breakfast pro-

ceeding for some minutes; but the friends were much too inclined to enjoy themselves to remit their exertions—either masticatory, bibulous, or jocose—for any other than the shortest possible period; and in a few seconds a running fire of jests again was heard, accompanying the rattle of knives and forks and the clatter of tea-cups—almost as musical a noise as a modern piano forte concerto—and so it continued till that luxurious meal was terminated.

“Oswald, my good fellow,” said Horace Walpole, addressing his father’s confidential servant as he was passing him, “have any letters arrived from Norfolk, or has any one called since I have been in town?”

“Your letters are in the Library, Mr. Horace,” replied Oswald, looking with an air which he had learned to put on, from having passed so much of his life in the service of so eminent a diplomatist as Sir Robert Walpole.

The young Member was too familiar with

his old friend, to allow such a look to escape him. He saw there was something in reserve of more than ordinary importance; and availing himself of the first opportunity of leaving his friends, he was soon in that well-known chamber, so redolent of the odours of calf-skin and morocco. There was a fine collection of books ranged on their shelves with a military regularity—the tall folios and bulky quartos appearing like a squadron of heavy cavalry—the large paper octavos standing like a column of grenadiers—and the duodecimos and other little books, which appeared from the gaps on the shelves to have been in most frequent requisition, were evidently doing duty as light infantry in skirmishing order.

On the top of the book-cases, at regular distances, were busts of eminent scholars; and a fine portrait of George II. in his robes, by Kneller, was placed over the old-fashioned mantel-piece. A large library-table stood in the centre of the room, fur-

nished with movable desks all round and drawers beneath, and bearing a massive silver ink-stand, a liberal supply of writing materials, a despatch-box, a few recently published books and pamphlets—presentation copies from subservient authors and politicians of his own party—reviews, magazines, newspapers, and piles of documents of every possible form, size, and description, from a lady's billet to a county petition.

Horace drew one of the heavy chairs to the place where he noticed several letters; and immediately selecting one bearing the well-known handwriting of his father, with a throbbing heart he threw himself into the seat, and impatiently tore the large armorial seal with which it had been secured.

If he expected it was to contain the summons to Houghton, for which he had so ardently longed, his surprise must only have been exceeded by his disappointment when he read the following lines:—

“Houghton Hall.

“DEAR HORACE—You will find that an income sufficient for your wants has been secured to you, as you will henceforth receive £2000 per annum from the Exchequer, with £1000 as Comptroller of the Pipe; and as I think it is quite time you should have a house to yourself, I have directed my agent to engage a very suitable one which was in the market. As all arrangements have been completed, I recommend you to lose no time in taking possession of your new home, and remain,

“Your affectionate Father,

“ROBERT WALPOLE.”

“To Horace Walpole, Esq., M.P.”

The perusal of this curt specimen of fatherly affection was a severe shock to the sensitive feelings of the younger son. If he had been a natural child, and was to be got rid of in some respectable way, that should prevent the necessity of any farther reference to a parent who was ashamed of him,



this sort of dealing was just what might be expected from a person in Sir Robert Walpole's position; but to the son who had legitimate claims upon his love, whose heart was overflowing with filial affection, the present proceeding was very humiliating.

The young Member flung himself back in his chair in an agony of shame and sorrow. Surely, he thought, the heart of the great Statesman must have parted with all proper feelings for his kind, if he can dispose of his offspring in this uncereemonious manner; not a syllable of approval, or even of notice, of the obedience and the tact he had shewn in obtaining the Cornish borough! not a word of affectionate inquiry, though they had not met for so long a time; not a sentence of parental advice, though he was to take upon himself so many new responsibilities! He was turned out of the house, that was clear. He was sent about his business. He was provided for and got rid of.

It was plain he was looked upon as a mere machine, that was to be put in its place and made to act, and required no further care.

He began to fancy he was thought to be in the way of his elder brothers while he remained under the paternal roof, and felt a pang of jealousy as he reflected on the advantages they had been allowed in the constant communication they had enjoyed with one or other of their parents, whilst he had been banished as one unworthy of such association. He was well aware that in capacity he was far superior to either, and this made him feel more acutely the ill-judged partiality with which they had been treated.

“Why, Horace, my boy,” exclaimed the friendly voice of his cousin Conway, slapping him familiarly on the shoulder, “What can have given you such a deuced fit of the blues? I’ll be hanged if your phiz isn’t quite cerulean.”

“Read *that*, Harry,” said the other, thrusting the letter into his hand. The young

officer very methodically opened and read the epistle. "Allow me to congratulate you," he replied, as his eye ran down the contents; "three thousand a-year, and a house of your own. What a lucky dog you are! If such a windfall had happened to Harry Conway, now, instead of to Horace Walpole—'odds counterscarps and demi-bastions!' as a fellow says in our regiment."

"Oh, Harry, it has made me quite miserable."

"What, your father's generosity! Upon my soul, you puzzle me. But if three thousand a year makes you miserable, what would six have done? Come, cheer up, and thank your stars it's no worse. To be sure, the old gentleman has taken a deal of trouble to show the flinty heart so freely attributed to fathers. His want of regard for you is quite shocking to contemplate."

"You make a jest of it! You don't—you can't understand my feelings."

“Of course not. How can you expect a poor captain of foot, with more gold on his shoulders than in his pocket, to understand the feelings of a gentleman who is desperately wretched because a kind father has made him comfortable for life?”

“*Kind*, Harry! Kind father! I don’t think Sir Robert has the most remote conception of what kindness towards a son means.”

“Why, how you talk! Of course it means the gift of two or three pretty sinecures—such as constitute your three thousand a-year. I would the Fates had provided me with so affectionate a parent. I would take his kindness in a very different mood from that in which it is but too clear you now receive it.”

“But, Harry, was there ever so unfeeling a letter written?”

“Unfeeling! A letter that provides you with a handsome establishment and a monstrous pretty fortune, unfeeling! Come,

Horace, my boy, your success in Cornwall has turned your head. You don't see things now as you ought to do; there's not a younger brother of a noble family in England, who wouldn't be ready to jump out of his honourable skin at the fair prospect now opening before you!"

"*Younger brother!*" exclaimed Horace Walpole, bitterly, "that is the curse with which I am sent adrift. It seems, like the mark of Cain, to brand me with an evil name wherever I go."

"Then don't go," said his friend, who knew that a jest would have more effect upon his melancholy cousin than any arguments. "Stay in your new house—spend your three thousand a-year like a gentleman—seek to make a name in the conflict of parties—observe well what is going on around you—await your opportunity—and then, younger son or no younger son, if you don't get a tolerable good place in the ladder of life, I shall be prodigiously mistaken."



“Look at those fellows we have left in the other room. There is West, for instance. He is an only son—the only son, too, of a Lord Chancellor. Yet he has not half the chance you have of getting on in the world. Next, there is Gray, who bids fair to be a mighty pretty poet; but rhymes are monstrous insecure stepping-stones up the acclivities of ambition. Then we come to Asheton, Montagu, and Hanbury Williams—choice spirits, out of doubt. They were not born to hide their light under a bushel—but, my dear coz, whatever merit they possess, your superlative one of having a First Lord of the Treasury for your progenitor, is certainly not amongst them.

“Lastly, there is George Selwyn—a drowsy phoenix, slumbering on the ashes of his own jokes; an incomparable fellow for smart sayings. He knows how to put in a jest as a skilful bowler puts in a cricket ball. In short, he is a great talker. But then, you know the proverb so often quoted by us in

old times, in reference to the doings of such great personages. You have no fear of being bowled out by him.

“The long and the short of it is, Horace, that you are too proud or too lazy to work, and yet ashamed to beg; you, I doubt not, would prefer lying under the tree, waiting for the fruit to drop into your mouth, to receiving any portion from the hands of another, or taking the trouble to climb, and gather the fruit for yourself.”

“You are wrong, Harry, be assured!” replied his kinsman seriously. “I am as far from being indolent as from wanting ambition. Indeed, I will confess to you that more than one of those deep influences which impel adventurous spirits on the road to greatness, urges me in the strongest manner to endeavour to achieve distinction. It is no common career that would satisfy me. I set my heart on the possession of rank, wealth, great political influence, high literary fame, and the most brilliant reputation in society.”

Captain Conway perpetrated a prolonged whistle on the highest note in the whistling gamut.

“Modest ideas in a younger son, certainly!” he observed, laughingly; “by Jove, though,” he added in a more serious manner, “with so capital a father as yours, such things are not impossible. I wish I had your chance of promotion; I promise you I should not be quarrelling as you now are with the first instalment of Dame Fortune’s favours. Younger son, indeed! So well do I think of your prospects, I wouldn’t mind standing in your shoes. I don’t think I should make a bad Secretary of State. In your place I couldn’t be satisfied with a less important office.”

Captain Conway was a young man who possessed in an eminent degree the peculiarity of always looking on the bright side of things. Let the worst case be presented to him in its worst light, and he never failed to discover something in it vastly consola-

tory. In his eyes, the greatest misfortunes were sure to bring some benefit with them. The most intolerable disappointment would not come unattended with some striking advantage.

Some "friend of humanity" once pointed out the deplorable condition of juvenile chimney-sweeps; he replied cheerfully, "Ah! but then only think what a capital dentifrice they have always ready for their use, and *no expense to them!*"

On another occasion, a very melancholy case of distress was represented to him of a poor woman who had lost her husband and three children in one week, by typhus fever. There surely could be nothing consolatory in so sad an affliction, his friends thought: but Captain Conway at once saw the case had a bright side. He encouragingly remarked, that, under the circumstances, one suit of mourning would be sufficient to shew the grief of the poor woman for all the family; but had they died at in-

tervals widely apart, she would have been obliged to put on fresh mourning for each, which must have been dreadfully inconvenient to a woman of her limited means.

Horace Walpole listened to his gay cousin's representation of the bright side of his affairs, till his own gloomy view of them cleared up considerably. He could not, however, avoid feeling most acutely the want of sympathy for him that there seemed to exist in his father's heart.

Whilst smarting under the influence of disappointment, his mind kept recurring to a passage in his past life, that appeared to be most vividly remembered, because he had come to the resolution of burying every transaction connected with it in oblivion. His heart beat more rapidly—there was a glow on his cheek and a fire in his eye to which both had long been a stranger. But it was a momentary flashing forth of a spirit that he considered ought to be dead and buried, or at least ought to assume a dif-



ferent shape, and exhibit opposite tendencies.

A little self-examination would have shewn him the inconsistency of his feelings. He had vowed himself a neophyte in the service of diplomacy—he had sworn to worship only at the altar of politics. But his was indisputably a hard lot. What service had he previously foresworn?—At what altar had he so long been used to worship? Filial love was with him a deep and holy influence, that had become, as it were, his very life—but he could have confessed that the heart is capable of as holy an influence that in its object was dearer than life itself.

These influences had been in opposition to each other: it was only by the entire sacrifice of his happiness that he had allowed the former to triumph. The disappointment he experienced in the cold formality of his father's conduct, seemed to shew how vainly he had made that sacrifice,

whilst forcing on him the conviction that now he had lost all and could gain nothing.

But with the young, despondency makes but a brief sojourn: Horace Walpole had become possessed of new duties and responsibilities sufficient to keep his mind too actively employed to indulge, to any injurious extent, in unprofitable repinings. He had chosen his vocation. To him, though the Past offered no solace, the Future had at least ambition.

“Come back to the breakfast room,” cried his cousin laughingly, dragging him towards the door; “Hanbury Williams has written a new song, which has made all our sides ache, and caused Selwyn to be wide awake for five minutes; you must come and hear it.”

Unresistingly Horace allowed himself to be led in the required direction.

## CHAPTER V.

## PRINCE FREDERICK AND COMPANY.

WHY it was, or how it was, has ever been a mystery, and a mystery it is believed must ever remain; but so it was: the Royal Family of England, for the first two or three generations of the Hanoverian dynasty, were remarkable for their dislike of each other in the direct line. George I. hated his heir, and his heir returned the compliment with interest. George II. did ditto to his father, in his domestic account with *his* Prince of

Wales; and the prince followed the precedent that had been set him by his progenitor, with a cordiality that must have satisfied the most sceptical that he came of the true stock.

There must have been some peculiarity in the blood of the Brunswick Luneburg race, to have created this curious characteristic. We know that fathers may have flinty hearts, and that sons do occasionally shew any thing but a proper degree of affection for their "governors;" but such are ordinary fathers and sons. The divinity that is said to hedge a king, ought, we humbly conceive, to have fenced in the Majesties of George the First and Second from such vulgar squabbles as disturb the peace of vulgar families. But it appeared very much as though these Hanoverian heirs were a species of royal cuckoo, that each in his turn, as soon as he was well fledged, and arrived at his full strength, sought to tumble the old birds out of their nest, and

take the whole accommodation of it to himself.

We don't pretend to say that there are no cases on record in which princes have shewn themselves impatient of their fathers' rule. We have in our memory as fine a collection of family jars as ever were fabricated out of royal clay; but then such things were always managed in a princely fashion. If an eldest son had a domestic grievance to complain of, he rallied his friends around him, proclaimed his quarrel to the world at the head of an army, marched against the parental banner, and it has more than once happened, given his imperial father a sound drubbing preliminary to turning him out of his throne. Now this was not exactly filial—we question if it was quite respectful—but then there is something characteristic in it—it is a princely way of doing such things.

In another case, an old gentleman, in the full enjoyment of his dignities, suddenly



receives intelligence of the revolt of a distant part of his dominions, with the object of obtaining the throne for his heir. Does he weep “tears such as royal fathers shed,” and denounce his son’s ingratitude and his subjects’ rebellion! Not a bit of it. He calls for his armour and collects his forces; at the head of his invincible squadrons charges the rebels; disperses them to the four winds; takes his son prisoner; and—chops his head off. This is not, in every respect, so parental, perhaps, as might be desired. Such conduct could not be quite natural in ordinary fathers of families; but then, could anything be more truly royal?

But the members of the ancient house of Guelph chose to quarrel with each other—certainly in a much safer, assuredly in a less creditable fashion. The king and the heir-apparent squabbled like two ancient fish-women for a customer; they carried on their rivalry at a safe distance, but near enough to allow of their vituperative elo-

quence having such a range as would convey it with full force against its object—they warred not with weapons but with words. They would not shock the civilised world by descending to fight like gentlemen; they only abused each other like pickpockets.

George I. denounced his son as a scoundrel. George II. did the same. George Prince of Wales regarded his parent with abhorrence—Frederick Prince of Wales entertained exactly similar feelings. This hereditary hatred acted like the system of fagging at our great schools—the successor, notwithstanding the terrible extent to which he must have suffered in his subordinate state, cultivating the same tyranny over *his* subordinate with all his power and malice.

The reason of their being such exact counterparts of each other can be logically explained:—

1. We have many reasons for suspecting

the first of our Hanoverian sovereigns to have been thoroughly heartless.

2. We have looked in vain at his actions for any evidence of mind.

3. Without heart and head, such a king must have been little better than an old block.

We must not be surprised, then, to find his son and grandson such perfect “chips of the old block.”

Prince Frederick is the only member of this royal family with whom our story has anything to do at present; and as he happens to be one our readers are likely to have heard comparatively little about, we shall proceed to introduce his Royal Highness, as much at full length as possible.

Frederick, Prince of Wales, was contemporary as well as namesake of that illustrious royal commander who had succeeded to the throne of Prussia—we verily believe, only to shew that there could be a Frederick the Little as well as a Frederick the

Great. He had arrived at man's estate, with as little sense of manhood about him as of any other sense of which it was likely he could make a creditable use. He had been educated in Hanover—of course in the same school in which his father and grandfather had picked up their education. It must have been a curious system of scholastic study of which they had the advantage. Whether it boasted of a royal road to mathematics, as well as to other branches of learning, has not been made known to us; but, as far as can be judged of it, it combined the elements of folly with the higher branches of licentiousness.

Where there was vice at the foundation, it is unreasonable to expect much virtue in the superstructure. Indeed, that did not seem to enter into the design—for where mistresses were employed as the *Caryatidæ* of the edifice, it was clear enough the main features of the elevation were profligacy and wickedness.

At the period of our story, Prince Frederick was a husband and a father. If we could employ the term husband-german, and father-german, in the same sense as cousin-german, we should convey a very correct idea, in more senses than one, of the sort of *distant* relationship he bore to his wife and family. But the Princes of the House of Hanover had been brought up in a peculiar independence of family ties, and with a disposition equally peculiar for ties of a more familiar and less sacred character. Their tastes were very homely, yet were quite at variance with whatever belonged to home; as witness in the instance of George I. those female ogres, the Schulenburg and the Kielmansegge—in that of George II. the unfascinating Wallmoden—in that of Prince Frederick, half a dozen “Cynthias of the minute,” equally notorious for the humility of their attractions, and the *imposing* way in which they were employed.

Yet his Royal Highness had one attach-



ment that, at least, with those easily pleased, might have been considered rational. As among the blind the one-eyed is a king, among the plain faces of the Prince of Wales's favourites, the moderately good-looking features of Lady Archibald Hamilton allowed her the claims of a beauty. The Prince shared the rather frequent foible of such exalted personages, of preferring other men's wives to their own—a compliment to the superior taste of the husband, which it is to be hoped the gentleman sufficiently appreciated. Lady Hamilton was a wife and a mother. It was no doubt a great honour for the seventh son of a Duke to possess a wife who pleased the Heir Apparent; and possibly their son, Sir William Hamilton, subsequently so well known for his lady's intimacy with Nelson, and other acquaintances of the like kind—as the play-bills have it, “too numerous to mention”—found consolation in the remembrance, that whatever his wife was, his mother had been.

But Lady Archibald, though a Venus more in inclination than in appearance, could render herself not only agreeable but fascinating. There are some women, of but second-rate attractions, who possess a manner that renders them a vast deal more alluring than their more beautiful contemporaries. Her Ladyship possessed this manner in a very eminent degree; and having acquired from nature a disposition for gallantry, she seemed to have no intention of letting it lay fallow.

The Prince of Wales was her acknowledged lover, and Lord Hamilton her acknowledged husband. But her capacious heart yearned to disperse its sensibilities over a more extensive field. She longed for more lovers and more husbands. She therefore sought conquests in various directions, unknown, of course, to her royal gallant, and, it is to be hoped, quite as much so to her noble partner.

There was another feature in Lady Archibald's character. The Prince, under the

influence of her fascinations, chose to make her Ladyship the depositary of all his political secrets, which the sagacious lady always contrived to dispose of in another quarter for the best terms she could command. She did not profess to have any politics. Indeed, although she had never heard the line, she would not have been disposed

“ To party to give what was meant for mankind.”

The reader must therefore be prepared to find the Heir-Apparent's favourite mistress occasionally falling into very strange company, and occasionally engaged in very strange scenes.

Prince Frederick had quarrelled with his royal father so often, that use had made quarrelling with him a second nature. His head had got filled—and it wanted filling terribly—with vague notions of the dignity and consequence of his position as Heir-Apparent. His father, he began to imagine, kept him upon an inadequate allowance.

He was very much in debt, as Heirs-Apparent so rapidly contrive to be; and took especial care every one should know that this was through his parent's parsimony.

As he took no pains to conceal how much he was opposed to the King, the political party who were in opposition to the government paid great court to him. It is singular how invariably Oppositions patronize the son of the Sovereign in preference to the Sovereign himself; and the more disobedient and contumelious he becomes, the more devotedly they commend themselves to his service.

The Prince of Wales was well aware of the power of the Tory party to render him formidable. Like persons of limited capacity generally, he had a quick eye to his own interests, and this sharpness of vision he often betrayed in a manner infinitely less respectable than banding with the opponents of his father's government. The leaders of the Opposition had also their selfish objects

in view. They regarded him as the best court card in their hands, and had hopes of playing him successfully against the King. These leaders comprised, in the House of Commons, Sir William Wyndham, a powerful debater, and one of the ablest Tories of the day, and Mr. Pulteney, a patriotic orator of vast experience and little virtue, impelled on his course by the most bitter hostility to his great rival, Sir Robert Walpole.

There were many other able men of the same party; but Pulteney and Wyndham are the most important, and shall have due respect at our hands. They were admitted into the Prince's counsels: but the chief adviser of his Royal Highness, and who was on the most familiar footing with him, was another Tory Member, possessed of two boroughs and very elastic principles.

With Bubb Doddington, the Prince was in the habit of being extremely confidential and familiar—as often condescending to make a butt as a dupe of him. For him, too, he



would prove the intensity of his friendship by borrowing considerable sums; but as the Prince did so without the most remote intention of repaying the money, it ought to be regarded as a much more striking act of condescension; for accepting a gift is, one would think, infinitely more gracious than accepting a loan.

Bubb Doddington possessed a great deal more ambition than sagacity—he worshipped the rising sun, and allowed his thousands to disappear from his pockets in a manner that, whilst it shewed wonderful ingenuity in the extractor, betrayed much too secure a conviction in the extracted that they were a golden seed, which, in due time, should yield a most abundant harvest.

But though Bubb Doddington was the most intimate of the Prince's counsellors, his Royal Highness had the good fortune to possess another who had obtained a much greater degree of influence over him. With this person his consultations were rigidly

secret. Few were aware how often the Prince rode in a certain direction ; a much more limited number were cognizant of these rides terminating at the villa of one of the ablest spirits of his time.

Henry St. John Viscount Bolingbroke took a vast deal of pains to convince his contemporaries that he was a philosopher ; his labours were not less great to satisfy them that he was a statesman. He had heard that extremes meet, and possibly he entertained the idea of dovetailing them in the combination he put forth to the world in his own proper person. We believe he did this with such marked success, that posterity have come to the conclusion that his philosophy and statesmanship ended exactly where they began.

St. John was now the gravest of philosophers—in the twinkling of an eye the gayest of men of pleasure ; you scarcely had time to admire the excess of his enjoyment, when he suddenly changed to the most ab-

sorbed of politicians: and whilst you were lost in wonder at his complete abandonment to the war of parties, lo! and behold! he was all for contemplation, primitive manners, and a hermitage.

We first find him exerting himself to become a public character towards the close of the reign of Queen Anne. His busy brain was ever intriguing; but, in consequence of some unhappy obliquity of intelligence, he usually managed to attach himself to the unsuccessful party. When the Queen was dying, he intrigued to bring in a successor; but somehow, in spite of all he could do or say, the Elector of Hanover came in, and the Chevalier St. George was kept out.

Although St. John might have accommodated himself to this disappointment had he been allowed, it so happened he was not; and finding that King George would not employ him, he went over to the Chevalier, who would. But the service of a Pretender, he soon found, required more philosophy and

more statesmanship than even *he* had at his command; and in fit of distaste for public life No. 1, he retired into privacy, and professed himself charmed with the delights of solitude and a French cottage.

Exquisite as was this quiet way of life to the philosophic statesman, he felt "there was something more exquisite still" in the employment of his great talents in the great field for which he knew them to be so well adapted. He disowned his Jacobitism—he professed himself a steady supporter of the Hanoverian succession—he wished to have nothing more to do with politics—and he declared himself only a harmless philosopher, who desired to be allowed to end his days in the study of virtue, in some tranquil corner of his native land.

He intrigued quietly, but very actively, for the favour he sought. The banished man owned his error, and promised an amended life. It so happened that amongst the King's ministers was one who knew him thoroughly.

Sir Robert Walpole and St. John had been schoolfellows. Walpole was too well acquainted with his old friend's meddling spirit, to place much confidence in his present professions. He opposed his recall; but a bribe of eleven thousand pounds to the King's ugly favourite overpowered his influence at the Council, and the philosopher was permitted to breathe his native air.

At first he did nothing but speak in apothegms, and shew his intense enjoyment of the society of a few chosen friends, his inestimable books, and the simple pleasures of a country life. In a short time the superiority of his schoolfellow, whom he was pleased to think so greatly inferior to him in all the higher qualifications of a minister—whom he considered to be no philosopher, and very little of a statesman,—rose up before him—disturbing his studies, marring his felicity, and destroying his peace of mind. Whether he affected to be Cincinnatus in the fields, or Pliny in the garden,—assumed the bear-



ing of a Mæcenas among men of letters, or a Lorenzo de Medicis in patronizing art—the figure of Sir Robert Walpole cast an envious shadow over his contentment, and his philosophy at once became prodigiously at fault.

Gradually he increased the circle of his friends till they comprised the leading Tories, and several of the most eminent public men of the day. He entertained at his table the most powerful writers; he became a liberal patron to whoever had talent of any available sort—pamphleteers, poets, satirists, painters, and orators, found him a cordial friend, and an admirable adviser. He set on foot a periodical called “The Craftsman,” in which he endeavoured to make his countrymen familiar with the various qualities of his great mind, and did not forget to shew them the remarkable deficiency in all such qualities in the mind of his rival.

It is on record that St. John, about this time, assumed to be on friendly terms with

Walpole, who permitted his being introduced to the King, and, in the same kindly spirit, invited him to be his guest at his quiet suburban villa at Chelsea. The sight of the comfort, the equanimity, the prosperous greatness of his hated rival, was too much for the disappointed politician; envy got the better of his philosophy, and so affected his stomach, that the first mouthful he took of the handsome banquet set before him, stuck in his throat; and the only way to conceal his overpowering feelings he could adopt, was a hasty withdrawal from the Minister's hospitable board, on the plea of sudden indisposition.

After this he exerted himself more strenuously than ever against his old schoolfellow; and managed to acquire in an indirect way so much influence with the King, as ultimately to create a prejudice in the Royal mind, that threatened the immediate dismissal of his Majesty's tried servant. It was confidently asserted, in what were considered the

best-informed circles, that Walpole was about to be dismissed, and that St. John was to obtain his place. One unlooked-for event disposed of the whole intrigue. The King died; his successor would have nothing to do with the busy plotter; and, in fit of distaste for public life No. 2, St. John retired to his quiet hermitage, and again shut himself from the world, and again vowed to devote himself to philosophy and solitude.

This fit had lasted its proper interval. Sir Robert Walpole was in possession of greater power than ever; and now his brilliant, specious, hollow, envious rival, was engaged in another intrigue for his overthrow,—devoting himself to it with an intensity of purpose, that appeared likely to be satisfied with nothing short of his destruction. He had not got hold of a king this time to work upon—he had a much more pliable material. He had contrived to impress upon the thoughtless, selfish, reckless Prince Frederick, that he was the only

man in England whose counsel could be of advantage to him. There was a certain garden-house erected at the extremity of the flower-garden attached to Lord Bolingbroke's villa at Dawley, that was fitted up with wonderful taste—Arcadian scenes worthy of the pencil of Watteau or Lancret, were painted in flowery compartments in the panelling—a small book-case of choice volumes attracted the reflective to study—luxurious couches and easy chairs tempted the indolent to repose—a marble table presented the finest fruits and flowers—and in a gay marqueterie commode were usually some extremely rare wines, with “all appliances and means to boot” for an exquisite repast.

This formed the usual cell of the philosophical Statesman. Here, in his fits of solitude, he shut himself from the world, and here he dreamt of impossible virtue on a down cushion; and, whilst filling himself with claret and ratefies, fancied he was an anchorite, disgusted with the vanities of the

world. The garden-house was certainly a very pretty retirement. It could boast of other advantages. When the fit of philosophy was subsiding, and the arts of the statesman were again coming into play, its possessing a door leading into an unfrequented green lane, made it a most desirable place for a secret meeting; and here had often come more than one of the leading Tory Members, to arrange with the clever, brilliant, slippery politician, the plan of a campaign against the existing Government.

At the period to which we are now referring, the room contained two individuals. One, a man of insignificant stature and mean appearance, was seated at his ease in a luxurious *fauteuil*, with a handsome three-cornered hat on his head, and a golden tooth-pick in his hand. His riding coat thrown open, displayed a star on the breast of his inner coat. The fine materials of his dress, and the handsome manner in which they were put together, proclaimed the wearer to



be a person of distinction. He might still be considered young, and was not ill-looking; his complexion being fair, and each feature well-developed. The general expression was that of self-satisfaction and complacency. He had evidently been enjoying himself,—which might account for the gratified air which then illumined his somewhat too intellectual countenance.

The other inmate of the garden-house was to all appearance a well-dressed and well-bred man of fashion—of tall—of even commanding figure, with a fine intelligent look, gaining its animation from a pair of eyes remarkable for their subtle expression. The countenance was now brimming over, as it were, with courtesy and respect, as, standing upright, and leaning on the back of the chair on which his companion was seated, he continued to address him.

These two individuals were Frederick Prince of Wales, and St. John Viscount Bolingbroke.

Bolingbroke was unrivalled as a conversationalist; possessing an extraordinary fascination of manner, with a remarkable brilliancy of discourse, that won towards him many persons who would otherwise have kept aloof from his intrigues. His attainments, too, were of a high order. If he was not entitled to the distinction of being very philosophical, it must be allowed that he wrote and spoke in a manner that would have conferred credit on more than one philosopher whose greatness has never been challenged. It was a thousand pities that a man with so great a mind should sometimes have shewn so little a soul.

By the way, it is a somewhat singular coincidence, that the present and two preceding centuries should have had its "busy B," each as greatly to be admired as little to be trusted. The seventeenth century produced Bacon—the eighteenth, Bolingbroke—and the nineteenth, one too notorious to require naming—a triumvirate of eccentric genius

no other country could have brought forth.

The interview had already lasted some time; but whether his Royal Highness was fascinated with the excellent wine of his entertainer, or with his equally inspiring discourse, he shewed no symptoms of taking his departure, but kept sipping from his oft-replenished glass, and listening to his ever-attentive host, as though both claims on his attention should have his best consideration.

The discourse must have had in it something unusually persuasive: its sonorous apothegms—its eloquent declamation—its transcendent philosophy—must have made an unusual impression on the Heir Apparent. Nor must we forget the consummate skill with which it was adapted to the limited intelligence that it was expected was to profit by it.

The Prince listened, pretending that he understood every word spoken by the brilliant plotter. The well-directed appeals to

his vanity effected more than would have done the most urgent appeals to his understanding. Perhaps it never struck the clever statesman, how extremely inconsistent was the part he was playing. He quite forgot how eagerly he had once plotted to shut out from all prospect of the throne the Prince he was now counselling to take a bold step in opposition to his father's Government. But he had now no thought of the Pretender—it is very likely he cared quite as little for every member of the Hanoverian dynasty—he cared but for one object, he entertained but one idea—to make use of the Prince of Wales as an agent likely to ensure the success of his grand scheme—to work the overthrow of his hated rival.

“The times never were so ripe for a change as at present, your Royal Highness,” he observed, by way of conclusion; “Walpole totters in his giddy elevation like an architrave too heavy for the slender

pillar on which it has been mounted. He is threatened both from within and without—from his own coadjutors quite as much as from the most determined of his opponents. Newcastle hates him—Townshend has taken offence at some imagined slight: few of them can brook his airs of superiority and assumed omnipotence with his Sovereign.

“The Tories, as a party, are daily attacking him with greater boldness. There is a powerful body of members of the House of Commons, amongst whom Wyndham, Pulteney, and Marchmont are antagonists at whose powerful voices he has long learned to tremble. There are men of great parts and influence in the House of Peers, who hold the name of the Minister in equal detestation.

“A combined attack is about being made upon him—certainly the most formidable he has ever had to defend himself against: let this be followed up by the proposed movement on the part of your Royal High-



ness—and I, who only desire to be considered the most humble of your Royal Highness's well-wishers, will venture to state that the result will be the disgrace of an incompetent Minister, and the elevation to his proper position in the eyes of the English people, of a Prince who has given so many assurances that he is born to secure their prosperity."

"That is just my way of thinking," replied the young man with admirable nonchalance, as he rose from his seat and began to adjust his riding-coat. "My father is not, in my opinion, likely to live much longer. I should like prodigiously to know how much longer it is possible for him to live."

"That is not, I am afraid, a question capable of a ready solution," observed his philosophic counsellor. "Life is uncertain to us all; but with the aged, dissolution must be a matter of daily expectation."

"He breaks fast," pithily observed his hopeful son.

“The signs of decay in his Majesty’s frame, it must be allowed, are becoming more and more conspicuous,” said his equally hopeful counsellor. “Death, moreover, is our common obligation to Nature; and if the account has been long standing, we are the less likely to be allowed to defer the payment.”

“When I succeed to the throne,” added the eager Heir Apparent, as he drew on his gloves, “I shall bear in mind the exertions of my friends in my behalf.”

“Such ideas are worthy of your Royal Highness’s generosity of mind. But,” said his Lordship, with a marked air of self-denial, “if I may be allowed to speak of so humble an individual as myself, I must beg to assure your Royal Highness that office has no charms for me. I have foresworn ambition, to study virtue—I renounce politics in favour of philosophy.”

Whether the amiable Telemachus put any faith in the professions of his skilful Mentor

does not appear. He almost immediately took his leave, and mounting his horse, which was in waiting close at hand, he rode towards town with the full intention of losing no time in taking the bold step which had been represented as so certain of advantage to him.

“Now I have him!” exclaimed the student of virtue, with much bitterness of emphasis, as, left alone in his luxurious retirement, he paced its confined limits with uneasy strides. “Walpole! the star which has been kept so long out of its sphere, now rapidly approaches to hurl you from yours! Though more than once balked of my revenge, I feel agreeably assured it is now within my grasp.”

Had the great Minister’s younger son, who, notwithstanding he felt himself discarded from his father’s house and heart, was thoroughly devoted to his father’s interests, been aware of this secret and well-devised plot to ruin him, it would have

offered the occasion he so much desired, to prove the depth of that attachment to his person that prompted all his thoughts and actions. But Horace was lamenting the forced estrangement he had no power to prevent,—except when his rebellious thoughts ventured into a direction even less likely to afford his troubled mind the consolation which he required. But had he entertained a surmise of his father's danger, not a moment would he have suffered to elapse before he had substituted action for reflection.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE SUPPER-CLUB AT "THE ADMIRAL VERNON."

THERE was a vast display of bustling preparation amongst the individuals composing *the establishment* of "The Admiral Vernon," a small public-house situated in one of the bye-streets of Soho. It was club night; and the bustling little publican and his bustling little wife, assisted by a still more active waiter and maid-of-all-work, were employing their best exertions in seeing that the long table in the supper-room was properly



laid—the uncushioned oak chairs set in their proper places—the floor properly sanded—the supper in a proper state of forwardness—the candles lit—the kettle boiling—the pipes laid out—the spoons counted—and the plates hot: in short, that every thing was exactly where it should be, so that no fault could be found by any of the extremely difficult-to-be-pleased persons whom, it was evident, the anxious landlord momentarily expected.

No doubt, “The Admiral Vernon” was to be honoured that night by a party of very fastidious *convives*, who could enjoy “the feast of reason and the flow of soul,” only when the said feast was “done to a turn,” and the said flow was exactly of the right temperature, strength, and sweetness. Most probably they were a select circle of Epicureans, who met together to enjoy, in the unceremonious freedom allowed at a tavern, a sociality too refined and particular to be permitted in their own homes.

Perhaps some such highly respectable assemblage as have found immortality in the pleasant pages of the Spectator, in which persons of birth and fashion mingled, and found enjoyments which they prized quite as highly as their more luxurious successors prize the attractions of the Reform or the Conservative Club.

The landlord was in his best blue coat and wig—the landlady in her best chintz gown and apron—the waiter and maid-of-all-work were sporting their cleanest face and hands,—in short the inmates of “The Admiral Vernon” were quite ready to receive their very particular company; and as the hands of the great clock in the room indicated an immediate approach to the hour of eight, they were all well aware their very particular company might be looked for every minute.

“I think there’s nothing to find fault about,” said the landlord, in a somewhat tremulous tone, to his wife, as he took a

last careful scrutiny of the preparations of the supper-table—clearly impressed with the notion, that if there should be anything amiss, it was likely to go hard with him.

The wife also gave her scrutiny. The result was perfectly satisfactory. The waiter and maid-of-all-work, with the same nervous apprehension, gave theirs; and a very heavy load seemed taken off their several minds when they had ascertained beyond a doubt all was exactly as it ought to be.

“Jane,” added the landlord, “go to the bar, to be in readiness to receive them. Jem,” he called to the waiter, “run to the front door, and see if any on ’em are coming. And Sally,” he added, “you take care every thing ’s dished as though you was doing it for a wager, so as they don’t blow me up for being kept waiting.”

Each of the trio obeyed with alacrity the directions he or she had received, and the master of the house busied himself a few moments in placing the chairs at what he

thought the most correct distance from the table. The attention he paid to such minutiae, shewed either how extremely careful he was to leave no room for dissatisfaction, or the strong impression there was on his mind of the difficulty there existed of pleasing the parties whose comfort he had been so anxiously endeavouring to secure. In the midst of his employment at the further end of the room, he thought he heard a noise. He felt assured some members of the Club had arrived.

There was a little rustling in the passage, and he heard his wife's voice crying "Oh fie now!" He couldn't mistake the sound that followed. But the man was something of a philosopher; he felt satisfied it was far better of two evils to choose the least; he was well aware his customers could not be breaking his head while they were kissing his wife. He listened, and heard a familiar voice that made him shake in his shoes.

"Adorable creature! I am infinitely de-

lighted to find you alone. Allow me to say you are looking a million times more charming than ever. Positively, my dear, such prodigious perfections are quite thrown away upon that everlasting rascal. He is a low fellow, unworthy to touch your seraphic shoe-tie. Cursed low fellow, poz."

"Pray, let me go. Goodness gracious!"

"Indeed, my dear, you are buried, lost, cast away, in such a vulgar place as this. Those matchless beauties were born to grace a higher spear. Don't you think so, Duke?"

"Of coorth, I do, Marquith!" was the lisping reply in another voice.

"Incomparable charmer!" resumed the first voice, in impassioned tones, "exquisite epitome of your sex's perfections! Why will you tolerate that everlasting rascal? He is too low a fellow for the society of so divine a creature. Isn't he, Duke?"

"Dethidedly, Marquith," was the ready response.



If the trembling little publican was in the habit of looking at the bright side of things, like the gay-hearted Captain Conway, he ought to have derived very great consolation from the knowledge, that if his wife had admirers, they were worth boasting of. A Marquis and a Duke were surely high enough to satisfy the ambition of any husband. His company might well be fastidious, if these were to be regarded as a sample of them. But he did not seem very much puffed up with this gratifying reflection. He was intently listening, with a face in which fear was struggling with curiosity. No doubt he stood very much in awe of his noble customers.

But whatever were his reflections, they were brought to a sudden conclusion, by the waiter entering the room as hurriedly as if he had been shot out of a cannon. He had been hurled forward at the imminent risk of dislocating his neck, and saved his own bones by nearly breaking those of his master, with

whom he came in contact as the latter was approaching the door.

“So you were listening, were you, you everlasting rascal!” exclaimed the voice of the person styled Marquis, rapidly following the waiter, accompanied by his ducal companion.

Could it be possible? Yes, it was possible. The noble gallant, who had so stigmatized the poor publican as a “low-born fellow,” was in a suit of sky blue livery, turned up with crimson; his companion, whom he had addressed as “Duke,” wore another, still more showy, of scarlet and gold.

Neither the landlord nor his waiter seemed in the least degree astonished at beholding such apparently distinguished personages come swaggering towards them, making the most of their five-feet-eleven, with footmen’s laced hats upon their heads, and wearing a costume so derogatory. The reason for which soon appeared in the influx into the room of several men similarly clad.

This diversion appeared to be the salvation of the poor waiter. He managed to slip out of the room while the new comers were paying their compliments to those who had preceded them.

“Marquis, your most obedient! Duke, I kiss your hand.”

“Ah, Sir William! Ah, General! I protest I ’m monstrous glad to see you looking so well.”

“Positively we haven’t met for an age: but then you know I’ve been at Scarborough such a prodigious time.”

“And an immensity of good it’s done you. I vow to gad I should hardly have known you. The General’s quite another man, isn’t he, Duke.”

“Yeth—quite another man, Marquith.”

“I protest now you flatter me, Marquis—you do indeed, Duke. Demme!”

Such were the congratulations and recognitions that passed between these personages; and there was such an air of

fashionable affectation in their greetings, that a stranger might have looked on in doubt whether they held the exalted place in society they assumed, or were only, as was really the case, so many impudent lacqueys aping the manners and assuming the names of their masters.

More of the same fraternity arrived, who went through much the same style of greeting. Not the least amusing part of the scene was the curious way in which titles were appropriated. It was ludicrous enough to see a Duke in such parti-coloured vestments; but when another flaunting knight of the shoulder-knot was addressed by the reverend appellation of Bishop, the ridiculousness of the thing became still more apparent.

During the last two or three minutes the trembling little landlord had retained a respectful position near the principal group in the room, as though wishing to gain the eye of the tall consequential personage

yclept Marquis: but that great man was evidently not disposed to see his host, and more than once plainly turned his back upon him. Still the poor publican persevered, and with a trembling anxiety in his nervous fidgetty manner, that shewed he felt it to be a part of his duty. His pertinacity had the desired effect.

“Well, fellow, what are you doing here?” inquired the great man, knitting his brows very angrily, and putting his thumbs with a consequential swagger into the arm-holes of his flowery vest.

“If you please, a—a,” stuttered the little man, in a great fright—“I merely wished to know, a—a—whether your worship would wish to have supper served directly.”

“You did, did you, you everlasting rascal?” fiercely demanded the other. “Damn your impudence; You’re a low fellow, Sir—cursed low fellow. Isn’t he, Duke?”

“Exthremely low fellow indeed, Marquith,” was that worthy’s response. Other



expressions equally uncomplimentary came pouring upon his devoted head, till the poor man began to fear that he was likely to be thrust out of his room much in the same expeditious style his subordinate had so lately been sent into it. The entrance of two more visitors appeared to call off attention from him. They were Oswald, who was hailed by every one present as "Sir Robert," and a younger companion who wore the same livery.

"Gentlemen," he said, advancing into the room, "allow me to introduce a new member to the Club. This is my excellent young friend Mr. Fibbs, just returned from foreign parts, where he has had the honour of filling the post of Gentleman's Gentleman to our young master Horace Walpole, Esq. M.P., with whom he still remains."

"I feel very proud of being made known to so many distinguished persons," said a young man of a smart figure and good-looking features, that evidently did not lack assurance, as he bowed very low to the com-

pany—" *Comment vous portez vous?* as we say in France."

Most of Mr. Fibbs's new associates lost no time in paying their compliments and offering their felicitations, as if quite happy at making the acquaintance of so accomplished a traveller.

"I vow to gad I am prodigious glad we possess amongst us a gentleman of your undoubted breeding," observed the sky-blue-and-crimson Marquis. "It is not always that new members come before us enjoying your extensive accomplishments. I was in France once myself—went there on a *tower*: prodigious nice place, isn't it, Duke?"

"Monthrout nithe plathe, Marquith," was the ready reply.

"Gentlemen, you do me honour," answered the travelled valet: "I hope to be allowed the satisfaction of paying my footing by a bowl of punch; and beg to assure you that the proposal is quite *con amore*, as we say in Italy."

This generous resolution at once made Mr. Fibbs extremely popular with the members of the Club.

Whilst they are putting their cocked hats on the row of pegs along the wall, and taking their places at the table, agreeably to the intimation that was given them that supper was being served, we will just beg permission to state, as the reader now, however, may surmise, that the grand company whom the trembling little landlord had anticipated with so much anxiety, as though they were the most fastidious aristocrats under the sun, consisted of an association of upper footmen, butlers, and valets, who were in the habit of meeting together once a month, at an obscure public house (kept by a man sufficiently humble in spirit to endure their insolence), to wash down a hearty meal off their favourite joint, with copious draughts of their several favourite potations.

This favourite joint was invariably “a leg of mutton and trimmings;” indeed, so popu-

lar was it with them, that when, in consequence of a considerable increase in the members, something more was required to satisfy all their appetites, it was put to the vote whether another joint should be added, and it was finally resolved unanimously, "that they would have two legs of mutton and two trimmings."

The supper table, surrounded as it was by so many showy liveries, presented a singular if not an agreeable effect to the eye. There were other features in it that seemed to demand observation. At the head of the long table sat Oswald; and in justice to him it must be allowed that his bearing was that of a chairman, quite aware of his own consequence, and quite determined to maintain it. He was a man advancing into years; but his florid complexion, and clear, shrewd grey eye, gave a freshness to his features, that made many a good judge of age rank him twenty years younger than he was; then his plump face, surmounted by a capa-

cious wig, gave an air of tranquil dignity to his appearance that well became his seat of office.

The Chairman had near him the well-fed and consequential servitors of the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Townshend, General Churchill, the Marquis of Rockingham, the Bishop of London, and several other supporters of Government, including the travelled valet of Horace Walpole, who, though a new member, had, thanks to his own impudence, become as much at home amongst them as the Chairman himself.

At the other end of the table sat a tall, formal, half-sly, half-sarcastic-looking Scotchman, known as Sandie M'Foxie, the confidential servant of Mr. Pulteney, between whom and Oswald there was always a good deal of skirmishing going on, proceeding, of course, from the very opposite politics they advocated, as representatives of their respective masters, the two great political chiefs of the Whigs and the Tories. He was



supported on one side by the French valet of Lord Bolingbroke, and on the other by the English footman of Sir William Wyndham. Next to the latter was a little sleek smirking fellow, who acted as major-domo to Lady Archibald Hamilton. The liveries of other leaders of the Tories might have been seen at this end of the table. In short, it was very clear that there were two parties in "The Upper Servants' Supper Club," and that they ranged themselves under their respective leaders—the Walpole party being at top, the Pulteney party remaining at the bottom of the table.

The meal commenced with great spirit, by a simultaneous attack on the two steaming joints; the little landlord waiting obsequiously at the side of the Chairman, but with a nervous alacrity offering his services wherever they were required; and the rest of his establishment, excepting his pretty little wife, who remained in the bar to serve out the liquors, were actively employed in satis-

fying the multitudinous demands that were made upon them. Amid the clatter of the horn-handled knives and forks, and the rattling of the white plates, a medley of voices came from all parts of the table, making as rude a chorus as can well be conceived.

“Now, you everlasting rascal, am I to be kept waiting all night? I vow to gad I never saw so slow an animal in all my born days. Did you, Duke?”

“He ’th very thlow, thertainly, Marquith.”

“Hark ye, fellow,” continued the lisper in a higher key, “be thure you bring me the Pope’th eye and lotth of caper thauth. I’m very fond of the Pope’th eye with lotth of caper thauth,” added he in a confidential tone to his next neighbour.

“I don’t object to caper sauce, ’cause I never heard nothing against its being orthodox,” exclaimed the representative of the Bishop of London—a tallow-faced cockney, in a very stiff neck-cloth. “But no Pope’s eye for me: I hates everything Papistical.”

“A little more o’ them mashed turnips, Marquis, and a carrot or two; I don’t care about ’taters, they ’re so devilish low.”

“That Sir William ’s the greediest hog I ever came near,” remarked the Marquis in an under tone, as he was serving the vegetables, “he wants to have all the turnips to himself. Monstrous vulgar, isn’t it, Duke?”

“I ’m dithguthted, Marquith!” replied his friend, too intent on paying his devotions to his favourite tit-bit, that had been just placed before him, to be more communicative.

“Excellent bit of mutton, this,” remarked the Chairman, actively cutting away, his face moist with the steam and his own exertions, “let me recommend you a slice.”

“Thank you, I will take a little of the *gigot*, as we say in France,” replied his young acquaintance.

“I ’m just thinking this is as bonny a joint as a hungry man need partake of,” said the representative of the great Tory

party; and he added, with a sly glance at some of his friends, "the mutton's a wee bit too well flavoured to have been fattened on a Whig pasture."

At this jest the servants of Lord Bolingbroke and Lady Hamilton exchanged significant glances; whilst Sir William Wyndham's footman burst into a horse-laugh.

Much in this way the meal proceeded to its conclusion; the master and his attendants having anything but a sinecure in supplying the wants and wishes of their insolent customers. They darted backwards and forwards with inconceivable agility, as each sharp summons reached their ears: now for more meat—more beer—more vegetables, more bread—till, to their evident relief, there was no more of either to be had.

Oswald, who always had his eyes and ears open, whilst describing to the travelled valet of his master's son the characters of the different persons at the table with him, noticed how frequently the leading members of the

opposite party laid their powdered heads together over their plates, and seemed absorbed in communications of the deepest interest.

“ I suspect there ’s something in the wind,” he observed to his fellow-servant, as the cloth was being cleared, “ there ’s a deal more than ordinary in the cunning look of that cursed Scotchman. That Frenchman, too, ’s a deep fellow, and looks uncommon like a Jesuit; and then there ’s that smirking thief of my Lady Archibald, and Wyndham’s vulgar scoundrel. I know by their grimaces they are engaged in a plot against us. Now, Fibbs, mind what I say. You presently go and seat yourself at t’other end of the table, as though you wanted to talk with old Kickshaw respecting your visit to France. Say all you can against *us*. Do you take? —and if you can pick up anything, let me know.”

“ I understand perfectly. *Au revoir*, as we say in France,” replied his companion;



and the next minute he was seated by the side of the Frenchman, who, having been cordially hailed in his own tongue, made way for him with pleased alacrity. Nor was Mr. Fibbs ill-received by the party he now joined; this perhaps he owed partly to his being a new comer, partly to the handsome manner in which he had offered to pay his footing.

The legs of mutton and trimmings having been disposed of, preparations were now made for the after-meal enjoyments, which consisted of drinking and smoking. Every member was provided with a pipe and a sufficiency of tobacco, and he proceeded to call for whatever liquor he preferred, or could afford to pay for.

The landlord and his assistants were again obliged to exhibit an unnatural degree of vigilance in endeavouring to attend to every body at once. The variety of the different orders they received, was much more amusing than the sharp and imperative tones in

which they were given. After the new Member's bowl of punch had disappeared, the more aristocratic portion of the Club called for wine—many demanded gin-and-water—others called for usquebaugh; and the rest patronized such indescribable mixtures as flip, dog's-nose, lamb's-wool, huff-cap, three-threads, and purl.

"Now, you everlasting rascal, attend to me," cried his wife's admirer to the trembling little publican—"a bottle of Madeira. Duke, will you join?"

"Of coorth, Marquith."

"Then be sure it is the best in your cellar. We don't mind the expense—Do we, Duke?"

"D—— the expenth, Marquith."

"*Corpo de Bacco!* as we say in Italy," cried the new Member, "My friend Monsieur Quelquechose and myself will drink to each other's better acquaintance in a bottle of claret."

"*Oui, mon ami*, I shall be mosh glad."

“What ’bacco was that you were speaking of?” inquired the untravelled representative of Sir William Wyndham.

“Hignorant hass!” exclaimed the Bishop of London in an under tone, expressive of immense contempt.

“Now, gentlemen!” cried the Chairman, when he had ascertained that all the members had been provided with what they required, “seeing as how your pipes are lighted and your glasses filled, I must beg to propose our usual toast—High wages and easy places!”

This toast was drunk with the most lively demonstrations of applause. It was easy to see that every one approved of it.

“And now, gentlemen,” added the Vice from the other end of the table, “the toast ye have just drunk is verra proper and necessary for us all to uphold. I ’ll no say a word against it. But I ’ve got a bit of a sentiment whilk I ’m certain sure ye ’ll think quite as gude. I ’ll e’en declare it at once.

‘ May gude masters, who look after nothing, find gude servants, willing to put their hands to anything.’ ”

The sentiment, with its occult meaning, it is scarcely necessary to say, was quite as well received as the toast.

A few more toasts and sentiments of a similar description followed, and then, as was usual, the conversation began gradually to assume a political character. The shrewd old servitor of Sir Robert Walpole immediately took a leading part in it, and was of course opposed by the crafty-looking attendant on Mr. Pulteney. The chief supporters of each occasionally took a share in the argument; but, with the exception of a few interruptions, it appeared to be a trial of strength between the two rivals at the supper table.

In the course of the argument, the Walpole party were rather roughly handled by the liveried orator of the Pulteneys; and in return the Pulteney party got quite as sharply dealt with by the liveried orator of

the Minister. The Scotchman was most severe on the foreign policy of Ministers, abused their proceedings respecting Poland, denounced their policy in Italy, and was particularly indignant on the subject of the Pragmatic Sanction.

The worthy Oswald was not abashed by so many powerful exceptions, and defended the Government measures with prodigious spirit—identifying himself with the great Minister in the most amusing manner, by always using the pronoun *we* in allusion to the acts of the Government—which by the way was also the practice of his opponent, when mentioning the acts of the Opposition.

“In short,” said the representative of the Tory leader, after a long and severe philippic, “it’s as plain as the nose on your face, that your folly and misgovernment are sending the country to the devil.”

“That’s the fact,” added his neighbour, the liveried Sir William Wyndham. “The Whigs have done nothing but mischief



*We* are the only people capable of setting things to rights."

"I have my doubts on that head," replied the Chairman, "however, I 'm for Protestant ascendancy and the union of Church and State."

"We must be sure to support the Church," cried, with a hearty execration, the stiff-necked Bishop of London. "I halways stands by my own horder."

"A prodigious good resolution," observed the Marquis. "We, as belongs to the State, ought to support the State: what do you say, Duke?"

"Dethidedly, Marquith," replied his friend, momentarily taking his pipe from his mouth.

"I don't despair," rejoined Mr. Pulteney's servant. "If I 'm not verra much mistaken, there 'll be a wonderful change in things long before certain persons are prepared for it. If these worthless Whigs don't get out of our way, we shall be under the necessity of kicking them out."

The dependents of Lord Bolingbroke and Lady Archibald Hamilton again exchanged very significant glances.

“We are not at all afraid of that,” replied Mr. Oswald, with a vast expression of cool contempt; “we despise the wretched tools of a paltry faction too much to fear them.”

“Ye ’re too gude, by half,” angrily retorted Mr. M’Foxie; “but I ’m thinking its just better to be tools than rogues.”

“Rogues!” shouted the Chairman angrily, rising from his seat, “is that intended for this end of the table?”

“Rogues!” echoed the Marquis’s state footman with becoming dignity, “I vow to gad we ’ll not stand that; will we, Duke?”

“Thertainly not, Marquith!” replied his friend, with the same feeling of virtuous indignation very strongly impressed in his countenance, “it ’th moht inthulting. He ought to be made to know, perthonth of

dithtinethon mutht not be inthulted with impunity."

"Rogues!" repeated Oswald, his broad face in a blaze of anger, "I 'd have you to know who you 're a-speaking to."

"He 's a haggrawating hinfidel, not worth our notice," observed the prelate in livery, looking in the direction of the offender as if he had just swallowed something extremely disagreeable.

The Chairman was not in a humour to put up with such an affront. His good-natured physiognomy was turned to fiery indignation at hearing a phrase, which, though addressed to him, he knew to be applied to his master; and he retorted in language equally offensive. His rival replied in words still more objectionable, and the whole room then began to resound with the war of words. The Tories abused the Whigs like pickpockets, and the Whigs retorted on the Tories with a Billingsgate equally comprehensive.

The political partizans seemed every moment getting more and more excited—execrations and threats were exchanged, like long shots in a fight at sea. Every man at last jumped to his feet—a pitched battle seemed inevitable, when suddenly the waiter rushed into the room, bawling with the full force of his lungs, and a prodigious aspirate on the second and last word, that “the Opera was over.”

In an instant all tried to seize their hats and hasten to the carriages waiting in the Haymarket, or to the homes of their masters—in whichever quarter their services were likely to be required—with a degree of anxiety that made them quite oblivious of their recent dispute.

## CHAPTER VII.

## HORACE WALPOLE AND HIS VALET.

THE valet of a gentleman of fortune, a hundred years ago, was in many respects a different kind of animal to the fashionable valet of the present day. He was a most useful personage—he could do every thing—and, what was of equal importance, he could say every thing, required of him. He was possessed of an inexhaustible fund of good humour—an unfailing impudence—a happy invention: was not less full of vanity than



of mendacity—was devoted to his master—was employed as the ambassador in his amours—the counsel in his difficulties—and the prime minister in all his little matters of finance. He was also the most amusing of gossips; for it appeared to be a part of his duties to get acquainted with every thing and every body, for the express purpose, as it seemed, of entertaining his employer whilst engaged in the tedious arrangements of the toilet.

The stage has pretty frequently introduced us to individuals of this genus domestic; but we are more familiar with foreign than with native specimens. Nevertheless, the English valet, as he flourished about the middle of the last century, was a character worthy the acquaintance of the readers of the present; therefore, we shall make no apology for preserving a full-length of him in these pages in the person of Mr. Fibbs, the confidential and favourite attendant on our hero.

Fibbs and his master, though both in their youth, might call themselves old acquaintances; they had first become known to each other at Eton. The former was the grandson of the dame in whose house young Walpole lived; and his good looks, general cleverness, and cheerful disposition made him a favourite with many of the elder youths, who often employed him in confidential embassies, which the boys of the school could not undertake.

Walpole tried his fidelity more than once, and the result was so satisfactory to each that it created a mutual regard. When the Minister's son went to Cambridge, he contrived to get his humble acquaintance employment at his College, where his education proceeded rapidly; and when he went abroad, he took Fibbs with him as his personal servant. During his travels, the latter contrived to finish his education as a valet quite as successfully as his master completed that of a gentleman.

It must be allowed that the young man followed the usual practice of favourite servants, by taking a few liberties with his master; but then he never failed to treat him with the utmost respect before a third party. No indulgence ever induced the grandson of Dame Fibbs to behave to his master with an undue degree of familiarity. And there was another curious feature in the odd amalgamation of virtues and vices that made up his character. If it appeared necessary, he would beg for him, fight for him, lie for him, or steal for him, to any extent; but to his master he had no deception, and was a miracle of servile honesty.

Fibbs had not the objections his master entertained to seeking new quarters. He might have felt some little regret at leaving the Minister's splendid edifice in Downing Street; but when he found the new house so spacious—observed it to be so handsomely furnished—and learned that it was to be his young master's residence,

he was perfectly reconciled to the change. The honours of his master he regarded as in some part his own; and he rose in his own estimation to a marvellous height, when he reflected that he held the honourable and responsible office of valet to a Member of Parliament, having a fine house in Arlington Street, and who was, moreover, the son of the Prime Minister.

He drew a remarkably logical deduction—possibly the result of his Cambridge education—that, supposing Sir Robert Walpole to be the greatest great man in England, it followed that, in the eye of the world, his master was the greatest great man's son in England; *ergo*, it could not be otherwise than that an individual so confidentially employed by the latter as himself, should be entitled to the distinction of being the greatest valet of the greatest great man's son in the same great empire.

It is impossible to imagine a young man in his position better satisfied with it than

was the Eton Dame's grandson ; and when he entered the dressing room of his master, the morning after his introduction to " The Upper Servants' Supper Club," (as faithfully related in our last chapter), in a light sleeved vest, bearing on his arm his master's coat carefully brushed and folded, a silver mug of hot water in his hand, a lather box, case of razors, strop, and clean napkin, his lively countenance expressed as much secret satisfaction as it was possible to have concentrated in so moderate a compass.

In this respect he was a striking contrast to his master, who, as he sat in his dressing gown, evidently waiting his servant's approach, looked as discontented and uncomfortable as a young gentleman of more than ordinary sensibility could be, who wanted sympathy in the one object on which he had placed all his affection, and—a matter equally important in his personal appearance—wanted shaving.

Very few valets, now-a-days, condescend



to exercise the accomplishments of a barber; perhaps that is the reason why they have so completely lost their identity with the Leporellos, Figaros, and other popular representatives of their peculiar class. In these enlightened days gentlemen keep to themselves the enjoyment of the razor.

It may be said that they have not much to do; for what with the encroachments of whiskers, beard, mustachios, and imperial, the lathering and scraping have been reduced to a very moderate limit. But in the barefaced days of George II. the natural domain of shaving spread over the entire facial surface, wherever a bristle could be cultivated; and not unfrequently included the whole of the head. Now the same crop is carefully planted out, after continued top-dressings of those powerful guanos, Macassar Oil and Bear's Grease:—then, the whole was kept in stubble.

Shaving, therefore, was an operation demanding no slight degree of manual dex-

terity, and took up a great deal of time. This period, which would otherwise have been insufferably tedious, the operator contrived should pass by as pleasantly as possible, by calling in aid the resources of gossip, scandal, and entertaining anecdotes, which were as much at the valet's disposal as his soap-suds.

“A fine morning this, your Honour,” exclaimed Fibbs, as he proceeded to place a napkin round his master's throat, “prodigious fine morning. Almost as fine as we had at Rome. *O bella Italia!* as we say in Italy. That is the country for fine weather. For my part, I cannot imagine why everybody does not desire to live there. Nevertheless, I am well aware that there are prejudices. The Laplander prefers his cheerless snows to the sunniest climes. *De gustibus non est disputandum*, as we said at Eton.

“I must acknowledge I'm all for sunshine,” he continued, as he briskly manufactured the lather, “it puts a man in good

spirits, your Honour. I don't think there would be any suicides, if the sun could be made to shine all the year round. And there would be a great deal more happiness in the world, depend on 't. The men would be too comfortable to think of quarrelling with each other. I say nothing of the women, for your Honour knows—'the greater includes the less,' as we said at Cambridge.

"It's a thousand pities, every country hasn't a sun of its own," he added, as he half smothered his young master's nose, mouth, and ears under an accumulation of soap-suds, briskly distributing it equally over the face with the brush, with the nonchalance of an artist laying his colours on the canvass; "it would be an arrangement, a great deal more satisfactory, your Honour, depend on 't, and make vast changes over the whole civilized globe. The foggiest Hollander would become as sprightly as a Gascon, and the miserablest native of Greenland would out-laugh the merriest Savoyard that ever danced

to a cracked flageolet. *Fiat lux*, as we said at Eton, and then nobody need have the vapours. We should see the world in its brightest aspect; and its improved appearance would vastly improve our spirits."

Possibly his young master might have made some observations on this original conception of his servant for making all mankind happy, but he knew his mouth to be too well fortified with a breast-work of lather, to risk opening his lips. And now the bright razor flashed before his eyes, with a preliminary strop on the operator's palm; and he was one of those wise men who would refrain from entering into an argument with an opponent flourishing a deadly weapon within an inch of his throat.

"I 'm sorry to see your Honour so dull," continued his volatile attendant, as he proceeded to remove the lather he had just laid on so artistically; "I remember when we were at Rome, you were regarded as the most cheerful Englishman in the dominions

of his Holiness. But then there was a lady in the case, and *Amor vincit omnia*, as we said at Eton. She was very beautiful, and very—

“By your leave, I must have your Honour’s nose a little higher,” suddenly observed the operator, as he elevated that useful member with his finger and thumb, so as to allow the upper lip the full benefit of the sharp blade passing so dexterously over it. “Yes, I must acknowledge she was what I call a great beauty, your Honour. *La belle des belles*, as we say in France. But I never could make out exactly, your Honour, what parted you. I remember well enough her saying to me once, when I took a billet from you to the Palazza What-d’ye-call’em, in which she lived, ‘Signor Fibbs,’ says she, ‘I have a great regard for your Master.’ ‘He’s dying for you, my Lady,’ says I, quite plump; for I invariably look on such small acknowledgments on the part of her sex as a *petitio principii*, as we said at Cambridge, and allow the



poor creature the full benefit of it. ‘Signor Fibbs,’ says she—

“Your Honour’s chin a little lower—that ’s it,” said the gossip, interrupting his reminiscences for the purpose of securing a proper completion of his task. “‘Signor Fibbs,’ says she, ‘tell your master, from me, that I am perfectly sensible of his delicacy’—those were the very words, your Honour—‘perfectly sensible of his delicacy, but that an impassable gulf yawns between us, and therefore it is impossible that we can be anything to each other.’

“I was a little transmogrified at this, your Honour, you may be sure, knowing every thing respecting you both so well as I did; but then I was quite as well aware that woman is an animal *sui generis*, as we said at Cambridge, and therefore pretended to take what I had heard as a matter of course. I won’t say I didn’t call to mind at the time a certain rosy-cheeked little girl at Frogmore, who cried her apron wringing wet when your Ho-

nour left Eton ; and yet, confound the jade, a month afterwards married the miller's club-footed son at Datchet. *Homme propose et Dieu dispose*, as we say in France : but when the man *don't* propose, 'tis the girl disposes of herself ; and, as if she fancied that the devil took the hindmost of her sex in the race for matrimony, it is generally in the most hasty and reckless manner possible."

"I think, Mr. Fibbs, you are giving that restless tongue of yours a great deal too much license," observed his master, as soon as he found he might venture to remonstrate — which opportunity he had been rather impatiently waiting for for some minutes—"how often am I to tell you never to allude to what transpired at Rome! . ." Here the young Member gave a profound sigh.

"No offence, your Honour," replied his attendant, deprecatingly—who was perfectly aware there was a mystery in this attachment

of his young master, and would have given half his wages to find it out; "sorry I alluded to the subject, your Honour; but cannot help being concerned that the affair should have ended so unsatisfactorily. But, *Che sara sara*, as we said in Italy.

"What would you please to wear?" he added, having completed his operations on his young master's head and face. "Which suit would your Honour like to appear in to-day?"

The necessary directions were given, and the process of dressing began. Like most young men of family of his day, Horace Walpole paid particular attention to his person, and his apparel was always of the most fashionable make. His valet seconded his wishes with great attention and assiduity, but it seemed a natural arrangement of the machine, for the tongue to keep pace with the movement of the hands. He perceived his young master to be in rather low spirits, and sought to

amuse him by a relation of all he had seen and heard the previous night. The ridiculous features of the "The Upper Servants' Supper Club" lost nothing in such hands; and the listener's thoughtful rather than sorrowful countenance brightened more than once, as he felt the humour of the scene. His smile, however, presently changed to an expression of the most intense interest, as the narrator began to unfold the suspicions that had been entertained by the sagacious chairman, of there being some plot hatching amongst the Pulteney party.

"According to orders," continued the communicative valet, "I seated myself between a couple of as sly foxes as ever robbed henroost—*arcades ambo*, as we said at Eton. I put forth all my powers of pleasing, together with certain accomplishments less worthy of credit, which though have often done good service. I considered, that to argue from false premises to just conclusions, and to employ the *suppressio veri*, as

we said at Cambridge, was excusable with such opponents."

"Did you hear anything to satisfy you that my father had aught to fear from the intrigues of his enemies?" inquired the Minister's son, with considerable earnestness.

"I heard nothing but hints," replied his attendant; "but they were pregnant with meaning: and I could see from the good understanding that existed between the Scotchman and his French friend, and the servants of Sir William Wyndham and Lady Archibald Hamilton, that they were aware of something that was vastly agreeable to themselves and their employers, and must be equally to the prejudice of Sir Robert and his friends."

"I doubt it was worth troubling yourself about," said his young master, as if disappointed at learning so little. "It is probable enough such persons would pretend to know what it was impossible



would come under their observation. If Lady Archibald did enter into a plot with my Lord Bolingbroke and the Pulteney party, it is monstrous absurd to imagine they would let their servants into their confidence, when secrecy was of the first importance to them."

"That is all very true, your Honour," observed the other. "But be assured, that as long as servants have ears, and doors have key-holes, a secret known to the master of the house is sure very soon to travel to his domestics. *Experientia docet*, as we said at Eton."

"Surely you don't mean to say *you* have listened at key-holes!" exclaimed his young master.

"Not to learn your Honour's secrets, certainly," replied his companion; "but to learn those of others in which you were interested. Every animal has some peculiar faculty on which it relies on an emergency. The feeble hare finds safety in her

swiftness of foot—the courageous cock defends himself with his spurs—the gentle partridge, when put in peril by the sportsman, trusts to her speed of wing—and the harmless duck avoids her foes by her skill in diving: the domestic servant, in his emergency, trusts to his ears; and whenever there is a tolerable conductor of sound, either in the way of thin partitions, opened windows, or key-holed doors, your Honour may be sure he will quickly find the use of it.

“I don’t mean altogether to defend the practice, your Honour,” he continued, “but it is natural we should desire to live and learn, and we must learn according to the means for acquiring information at our disposal. A key-hole is an indirect channel of communication, certainly, your Honour, and perhaps should be regarded as an unlawful one: but *Necessitas non habet leges*, as we said at Cambridge.”

“You have learnt no little sophistry amongst the knowledge you acquired at

Cambridge," observed Horace Walpole, in some degree amused at his companion's justification of an unwarrantable habit. The smile, however, was but transient: the reference that had so recently been made in his presence to an attachment he had entered into nearly twelve months before, had excited many associations of more than ordinary interest. He sighed again — a pretty sure sign that his feelings had been touched.

"Make your mind easy, your Honour, as regards this apparent plot amongst your respected father's enemies," observed his valet, believing his young master's solicitude had been excited in that direction. "I verily believe I should have got to the bottom of it last night, if it had not been for the skirmish that so suddenly sprang up at the table. But if there's a secret, depend on it I'll know the rights of it before twenty-four hours are over my head; and as I accepted the cordial invitations to visit

them, given by my liveried friends, at Mr. Pulteney's—Sir William Wyndham's—my Lady Archibald Hamilton's—and my Lord Bolingbroke's, depend on it, your Honour, if there is anything to be discovered, I am in the right road to find it out. *Restez tranquille*, as we say in France."

By this time the young Member for Calington had completed his toilet. His appearance showed at a glance the attention that had been bestowed upon it; and when he took his last scrutiny in the glass, he felt perfectly satisfied that everything, from the set of his wig to the fold of his shoe-tie, was perfectly unexceptionable. He gave some order to his attendant of an unimportant character, and some directions respecting visitors. But he spoke listlessly, as if his attention was in another direction. At last, as he was about to leave the room, he suddenly turned to his companion, and said, "By the bye, Fibbs, should you by any chance hear, in the course of your peregrina-

nations, any news of importance, menacing Sir Robert—anything, I mean, that can be relied on—I trust you will lose no time in communicating with me. No matter where I am, or how I am engaged, I shall expect you to find your way to me, and without allowing any unnecessary time to elapse, to put me in possession of whatever you may have ascertained.”

“And now,” said the Minister’s younger son to himself, after he had heard out his servant’s assurances of doing whatever he desired, and was making his way to enter the chair that was waiting for him in the hall, “now for Lady Archibald. If she is the woman I have every reason to believe her to be, I do not despair of being able to make her useful. Should there be aught to fear in these rumours of coalition against Sir Robert, I most earnestly hope I may be enabled to see the danger. I hope still more earnestly I may have the good fortune to guard him from it.



“ Ah, Arabella ! ” he exclaimed with more fervour, “ deeply as my spirit has been moved by thy exquisite beauty, I feel I could renounce thee, and all thy admirable gifts, to gain the proud distinction of being of service to so noble a parent.”

## CHAPTER VIII.

## ARABELLA FALKLAND.

WE think it now high time to introduce one of the *dramatis personæ* of this story, of whose existence, although we may have given some slight indications, we have said much too little to satisfy even the most gentle of readers. A tale without a heroine stands much in the same position as a conservatory without a flower; and although these volumes assume a more historical character than can be said to belong to the mere novel,

we are conscious that we shall be quite as much expected to fulfil the demands of fiction, as if we had as little to do with truth as that stupendous romancer M. Thiers.

There could only be one reason for our deferring so long the introduction of the young lady who is to play the important *role* in this drama of the last century—and this reason is, the want of any necessity for her appearance. Solomon said that there was a time for everything—and we are perfectly convinced he was right. There is a time for prize oxen and a time for white-bait—a time for the Horticultural Gardens, and a time for the ballet at the Opera House—a time for putrid bones, and a time for Perigord pies—a time for Archæological gossip, and a time for Tractarian foolery—a time for Stars and Garters, and a time for stripes and rags—in short, a time for God, and a time for the devil.—There must be, of course, a time for our heroine.

We have not delayed her entrance upon

the scene from a misgiving of her being able to play her part with effect. We beg to state that there is no room for doubt in such a case. The one pure and perfect chrysolite mentioned by the poet was not more admirable than was the nature of Arabella Falkland. To a tall commanding figure—a figure combining the majesty of a Juno with the spiritual grace of the more youthful Psyche—there were added features impressed with a spirit of such exquisite loveliness, that it seemed to the love-sick youth who ventured within the influence of her attractions, an impossibility to gaze into those soft, subduing eyes, without his whole being becoming thrilled with a new sense—a sense of the beautiful, so ecstatic, so profound, that it became from that time forth an epoch in his existence—a sort of new style in his calendar, by which he might date his sensations.

But these charms were physical only; for though her fine intelligence made itself visible

in her beauty as in a mirror, the graces of her person were but the natural dower granted to the daughters of Eve in fee simple to the end of time, for their maintenance, security and honour. Her mind was a Pandora's box, full, not of evil gifts, but of good, with nobleness at the top, and wisdom at the bottom, modesty in a quiet corner, and virtue everywhere.

At the period when she first made the acquaintance of Horace Walpole, she was living in Rome, with her father, Viscount Falkland, a nobleman of ancient family and of the Catholic faith, and an expatriated Jacobite, known to be in the service of the Pretender. She was young—just entering upon the quick sensibilities and proud resolves of womanhood—yet bearing upon her unsullied heart all those pure and holy feelings which, from childhood to adolescence, had grown and flourished around her generous nature, like the rich wild flowers of some ever-sunny clime upon a virgin soil.



Lord Falkland was in heart and soul a patrician—a man of somewhat haughty spirit—infinately proud of his unsullied blood, yet equally proud of his incomparable daughter. His change of fortune, consequent upon his adherence to the Stuarts in their misfortunes, had only made him more proud, more gloomy, more an ascetic, than he had been when possessed of the extensive revenues of Falkland Court. There were two or three powerful impulses at work in that busy brain, which swayed and directed all its energies. First came his love for his daughter—the last of an illustrious line, who seemed to inherit, with all the beauty for which so many of her female ancestors had been famous—as witness the immortal labours of Holbein, Vandyke, Lely, and Kneller—all the worth and talent which had distinguished the most famous of those churchmen, generals, and statesmen, whose effigies, from the same eminent hands, also assisted in adorning the great picture-gallery in their abandoned home.

Next to his passionate love for the only being beside himself who bore his name, was his affection for his sovereign. Loyalty had been a characteristic of his house for many generations. It had dyed many a well contested field with crimson in the troublous times of the First Charles—it was as ready to yield the same evidence of its sincerity in the equally hapless time of his unfortunate descendants. The son of James II. knew his value, regarded him with equal admiration and esteem, and gave him a post in his little court, which, though barren of pecuniary advantage, the loyal exile would not have exchanged for the greatest distinction in the most gorgeous court in Christendom.

The third and last of these powerful influences was his reverence for his religion. The Catholic Church had fallen somewhat from its greatness, but in his eyes it was the greatest as well as the holiest of holy institutions: many had abandoned its faith whom it had protected, honored, and enriched, but

the Falklands were not of the number ; and the last male of that steadfast race paid such homage to its spirit, as though he sought to make amends, by the ardour of his consistency, for the apostacy of those who had resigned its blessings.

He had married late in life, a few years subsequently to his expatriation from his father-land, a daughter of a poor but exalted Roman family. This connection with a princely house might have added to his dignity, but it was very far from increasing his resources. However, it so happened that the Princess unfortunately did not long draw upon them—she died in giving birth to a daughter ; and for a long time her husband appeared to have withdrawn himself from the world, to the sole enjoyment of the society of his Confessor, the Padre Michaeli, and his religious meditations.

The infant Arabella, christened after Lord Falkland's adored mother, was placed under the care of a kinswoman, the Lady Abbess

of a celebrated religious house in the neighbourhood of Rome; and the Signora Falkland happening to be a most intellectual as well as a truly noble Englishwoman, the child received so admirable an education, and her finely gifted mind was so skilfully directed to whatever could most elevate and ennoble it, that when the father received back his daughter, it appeared to his confused senses as though he had been in a heavy dream, from which he was awakened by a holy messenger, come to guide him to a world of glorious action and wondrous intelligence.

Arabella Falkland, though Italian born, was English bred : her sympathies were with her father's, rather than with her mother's home : her thoughts were more with Falkland Court than with the Villa Castrucci. Yet, grafted on English purity, Italian enthusiasm gave her a romantic temperament that existed only for what was most beautiful in nature, and most admirable in art. The study of the master-pieces of Italian poetry—

the lofty mysteries of Dante, the stirring thoughts of Tasso, and the eloquent feelings of Petrarch, had been joined with as intimate a knowledge of the loftiest examples of English genius in the passionate ecstasies of Shakspeare, and the holy aspirations of Milton. She was a being that seemed created to excite a deathless passion—till the beauty of her form and features was observed in the same ineffable brightness to clothe her thoughts; and then it was seen that she was as much the minister of Love as its idol—as completely the poet of Beauty as its object.

It was at this interesting period she first accidentally encountered, whilst exploring one of the classic ruins of her native city, a young Englishman, who came recommended to her favourable consideration by an act of gallantry, which at some risk to his life preserved her own. To her an Englishman was always an object of interest; but when on a second interview she discovered that



her new acquaintance possessed the most refined taste, an accomplished mind, and the most ready appreciation of all those gifts and qualities for which she felt such passionate admiration, an invisible link of communication arose between them, that every day's additional knowledge of each other's worth lengthened, widened, and strengthened, till it became a bridge strong enough to bear the rapidly increasing traffic of two youthful hearts, overflowing with love for each other.

The young Englishman, as soon as he ascertained who the Italian beauty was who had so ravished his senses, thought it wisest to conceal his family name; apprehensive that any information on this point would at once and for ever put an end to the exquisite happiness he was then enjoying. But Arabella Falkland having learned from him his Christian name, required no further knowledge. Her father was absent from Rome on a political mission, during the first fortnight of this acquaintance, and by the time

he returned, the feelings of the lovers were too much committed to be easily disentangled.

Lord Falkland, as has been said, was a proud man, and had the proudest views for his daughter—he was also a man of irresistible prejudices; and when he discovered that the son of a man he held in such absolute abhorrence as Sir Robert Walpole—the most dreaded enemy of the Jacobites—the most able supporter of the Hanoverian usurper—had dared to form an attachment with the daughter of a Falkland, it was impossible to imagine the extent of his indignation.

Arabella had been taught to hate the name of Walpole, as she had been taught to worship the cause which that name had so often tumbled to the dust; and with her natural enthusiasm she had learned to regard it with very considerable abhorrence. Yet, as soon as she ascertained that her lover was a Walpole, the name unaccountably lost a good deal of its detestable qualities. Nevertheless

she immediately became well aware that there was an impassable gulf between them. It was impossible for one brought up as she had been, to abandon the principles which had made the Falklands exiles in a foreign land. Attachment to the fallen house of Stuart formed the first article in her creed.

The enthusiastic do not readily give up hope; and notwithstanding the uncompromising hostility of her parent, she fancied that there was a prospect, though a very remote one, of her attachment gaining his approval. She created in that ideal picture gallery—her youthful mind—a vision that answered to her sanguine wishes. She could imagine a Prince of the exiled family, winning the throne of his ancestors with the energy of a hero; and the powerful Minister of the usurper, by a timely concession, making his peace with his legitimate Sovereign. What she saw beyond this, was a vista of brightness and beauty, that left

nothing for doubt, and as little for apprehension.

The last meeting of the young lovers gave to an hour more intensity of feeling than could have been distributed over an age. They knew that they must part. They were equally well aware that the obstacles that stood in the way of their happiness, were such as to render the rupture of their attachment inevitable. Arabella Falkland ventured to disclose to her disconsolate lover the faint star that twinkled in her future—but like herself, Horace Walpole was devoted to his parent. He would not hear of a possibility, that in his eyes was a degradation to his father; and being better informed of the state and feeling of his country, considered the prospects of the Pretender to be quite desperate.

They parted. Our hero kept his attachment a profound secret even from his nearest friends, and strove to consider it only as a brilliant dream, which had vanished without

leaving the slightest tangible proof of its visitation. Arabella Falkland also regarded it as a dream—but it was a dream from which she had been disturbed without having been thoroughly awakened. Her romantic disposition—her poetical imagination, united with a peculiarly sensitive organization, rendered the impressions which had been made during that agreeable intimacy too durable to be as readily erased as Lord Falkland desired.

There was evidently a struggle going on—generally the most intense of all moral struggles—the struggle of inclination with duty: and although there were no other indications of it than were to be found in a fading complexion, an absent manner, and a spiritless gaze, it was as severe as if its signs had been a thousand times more demonstrative. The only thing that supported her in this conflict was her pride. She felt that she possessed too high a position to allow herself to be humiliated by



a subserviency to her inclinations. It was not for a daughter of her illustrious house, to pine, because a stern necessity had made it a duty to stifle her emotions. Nevertheless—so omnipotent is affection, despite of all influences—she *did* suffer herself to be humiliated in the sense she had implied; she *did* pine, even whilst striving most earnestly to emancipate herself from the subjection she could not remove.

It is impossible to say how many moonlight nights she had sat at the same balcony, with the same lute in her lap, and the same soft music passing from its strings, as she murmured the melodious words of the Italian poet of whom her absent lover had been so ardent an admirer. Equally vain is it to enumerate the saunterings through favourite walks—the loiterings at particular spots—and the lingering beside certain trees and fountains, which marked her solitary rambles. Had any one told her she sought such places that she

might recall those associations connected with them, which enabled her to renew the gratification she had then and there experienced, for the first time, in the society of one she was bound to forget, her pride would have been up in arms in an instant, and she would have indignantly repudiated such a suggestion. Nevertheless, it was strictly true.

Arabella Falkland had acquiesced in her father's wishes. Apparently, she had become convinced that she ought to have no feeling in common with a Walpole. She had expressed to the young gentleman her determination to break off the affectionate intercourse that she unwittingly had allowed to exist: all the pride of her princely race revolted against the idea of a daughter of that ancient house entertaining a passion for a son of the worst enemy of her father and her sovereign. She had parted from her lover — she had burst asunder the bonds that had united them; yet he

had scarcely crossed the channel, when she felt the conviction creeping upon her mind, that she had been the suicide of her own happiness.

Lord Falkland was not an unobservant spectator of his child's state of mind; but he was too wise a man to attempt to combat it. He found that there were other uses for diplomacy besides attempts to delude courts and cabinets. He saw that a new pursuit was necessary to divert his daughter's attention, and exerted himself to interest her as much as possible for the unfortunate family to whom he had proved himself so devotedly attached. He assumed to take her into his confidence, and reveal to her the prospects of the exiles consequent upon his negotiations in their behalf with foreign powers.

She entered into this confidence with wonderful readiness. Her sympathy was most strongly awakened for the family of her sovereign; and as his Lordship dilated

on the very sanguine hopes he appeared to entertain of the youthful Prince, to whom all loyal Jacobites gave the title of Prince of Wales, the subject, in her eyes, acquired additional interest. It was impossible, she thought, to imagine a cause so worthy of the advocacy of the loyal heart, as that of the Stuarts. She made earnest inquiries respecting the young Prince, and received, with singular pleasure, her father's intimation of the probability there existed of his Royal Highness soon becoming a frequent visitor at their villa.

Her romantic imagination was in raptures, at the idea of rendering herself useful towards advancing the fortunes of this hopeful branch of the Stuart race; and to some mysterious intimations, which his Lordship had thought proper to drop occasionally, of the great services she might perform, did certain anticipated contingencies occur, she listened with breathless interest.

It was during one of these half-mysterious, half-confidential communications, that Lord Falkland and his daughter sat together, in the twilight of a summer evening, near the open window looking out upon the noble terrace that was so great an ornament to their villa. They sat together alone, and so had sat for more than an hour: the commanding figure of the sagacious statesman, with his proud and intellectual countenance, harmonizing well with the fine form and lofty beauty of his daughter, whose flashing eyes appeared to resume their wonted brilliancy, as she sat listening to his stirring representations of the favourable intentions of the Court of France towards his royal master. But the time had passed without her perceiving it—so absorbed was she with the eloquent discourse to which she had been listening.

“But it is not to foreign intervention solely,” he observed with emphasis, “that his Majesty looks forward to that restoration



for which all his faithful servants so earnestly pray. It would be quite at variance with his gracious disposition to be obliged to *conquer* his kingdom. The triumph would be valueless in his eyes, that could be purchased only at the expense of the blood of his subjects."

The young enthusiast paused, as usual, when she anticipated some important revelation—which, from these fine flourishes, she certainly did anticipate.

"In England," he continued, sinking his voice to a more confidential tone, "there is an incalculable number of the King's friends. We know from the very best authority, that, from the highest peer in the realm to the humblest peasant, the cause of the Stuarts has most devoted partizans, and that nothing more is necessary than the landing in the kingdom of a sufficient armed force to oppose that of the usurper, for these to flock to his Majesty's banner in thousands and tens of thousands."

“What a glorious moment will that be!” exclaimed Miss Falkland, warmly: “There is nothing I so ardently desire to behold, as such a spirit-stirring spectacle as a brave nation, like our dear countrymen, rising in arms to support the cause of their legitimate sovereign.”

“I think it not at all improbable that such a spectacle you may have an opportunity of beholding,” observed her father.

“Indeed!” cried the young lady, evidently as much surprised as delighted.

“Yes, my child,” he replied, “the time, possibly, is not far off, when we may both be treading our native soil—ay, both be enjoying, to our hearts’ content, the inappreciable comforts of our long lost Falkland Court.”

“My dear father, what blessings have you in store for your daughter! Dear England has appeared to me a kind of Paradise, to enter which I might long and long in vain. But Falkland Court—how have I treasured

in my mind every feature of that hallowed spot which I could prevail on you to make known to me! If ever human feeling felt the influence of a home-sickness, I have languished to behold the residence of my ancestors. Dear Falkland Court, what would I give to be within so blessed a sanctuary!"

"Do you think you could venture to run some risk to advance the interests of your sovereign?" inquired his Lordship.

"Am I a Falkland?" she replied,—and her fine features were as expressive of dignity as of loveliness. "Rest assured, my dear father, there is no danger I am afraid to meet in a good cause; rest assured, too, that there is nothing I should so much desire to do, as to serve, under any circumstances of peril or difficulty, the cause of our beloved monarch."

"My child," exclaimed the father, with emotion, "I cannot entertain the slightest doubt of your courage or of your ability;

and it is very possible in due course of time I may make trial of both. I have lately sometimes thought that your presence in England, where you are not at all known, might be extremely to his Majesty's service, as a medium of communication with the leading noblemen and gentlemen who may be considered the King's friends.

“But,” he added, in a more serious tone and manner, “before I can suffer you to embark in so responsible a business, I must be assured of your entire devotion to the cause. Do not misunderstand me. You are young, and have already shewn yourself much too easily led by hastily formed impressions. It would not do, where the lives and fortunes of many gallant noblemen are compromised, to send amongst them one whose heart was with their enemy. The inspired text says, ‘No man can serve two masters;’ nor can such double service be allowed to a woman. If your feelings and sentiments are given to any one known to be in bitter opposition to

us, your support can be dispensed with; but if, on the contrary, you determine to abandon all thought and sympathy, save for your legitimate sovereign and his faithful partizans, there cannot be a question that you may make yourself instrumental to the happy restoration all his Majesty's loyal subjects have so much at heart."

Miss Falkland had cast down her eyes during the delivery of the last sentences, and by her swelling bosom it was easy to perceive that she was under the influence of considerable emotion. As her father concluded, she raised her eyes, with a glance full of determination, to his own, and placed her hand in his. It trembled slightly, but the sagacious statesman did not choose to notice this feminine weakness. He pressed it tenderly, and then, drawing her towards him, imprinted an affectionate caress upon her forehead. They understood each other.

"I have been led into these remarks, my love," he resumed, pulling a letter out of his



coat-pocket, "chiefly in consequence of a communication I have received from your aunt."

"From Aunt Furbelowe?" inquired the young lady, with sudden animation.

"From the Dowager Lady Furbelowe," he replied. "My sister appears as irrational and inconsistent as ever. Fashion and politics, literature and conspiracies, by turns have full possession of that most unsteady vane, her ladyship's mind. Did I not know that her principles were as stable as her caprices were evanescent, I should be more careless respecting her correspondence than might be quite proper in so near a relation."

"Oh, Papa, you must not be so severe. Aunt Furbelowe is a monstrous favourite of mine. I have never seen her, it is true, yet her oddities have made her as familiar to me as though I had been in constant intimacy with her all my life. But pray indulge me with a perusal of her Ladyship's letter."

The indulgence requested was immediately

allowed, and Miss Falkland was soon engaged upon the following curious epistle:—

*“The Dowager Lady Furbelowe, at Scarborough, to Viscount Falkland, at Rome.*

“MY DEAR BROTHER,—The Doctors have ordered me to Scarborough to drink the waters; and though I hugely suspect them to be a set of ignorant quacks, who know no more of my constitution than they do of the Pyramids, I have posted through I know not how many miles of atrocious road, been twice stopped by highwaymen, once benighted, and thrice upset, and managed to get to the wells with whole bones, though deucedly hipped, as you may suppose.

“I have no doubt that the town are vastly sorry I have left them, even for a season; I was so much in the habit of affording them subjects for conversation. I do not suppose that any woman of my age ever gave her friends such constant cause for marvelling, back-biting, and scandal. Many an honest

dolt has found, in the retailing of my most intolerable sayings and doings, such a relief from the vapours as the faculty could never have given him, had he feed them even in strict accordance with their own appreciation of themselves. Now, alas! they have no better resource than my Lady Caroline Fitzroy, and her little freedoms—or my Lady Wortley Montagu, and her great ones.

“ Unfortunately, the vagaries of the Elector of Hanover with the self-denying Wallmoden, and those of his son with the no less amiable vestal Lady Archibald Hamilton, are as familiar as the tricks of Powell’s puppets, without being half so diverting. Vice and folly in high places come as naturally as two chairmen to a sedan; and so common are they, that to get distinguished by the town, an old fool like myself must needs do something vicious and foolish to a degree. My favourite vice at present would be slander—a vice sacred to old women of both sexes—but unfortunately for its due

exhibition, I can say nothing of the company I am forced to keep, that can count to their discredit or damage their reputations—credit and reputation being alike out of the question; and when I play the fool, instead of having an audience in my friends, I find them all rivalling me in the same performance.

“This, to me, has all the monotony of Mrs. Salmon’s wax-work—and so I have thought proper to change it for a little treason. My Lady Townshend and I have laid our heads together, after consulting with other Jacobites, who are permitted the singular indulgence of carrying their heads upon their shoulders; and we have come to the conclusion, that they were never so rife for a movement in favour of the Chevalier as they are now. The Whigs are disunited—the Tories discontented—the courtiers would be glad of a change where there is less necessity for studying German—and even the Elector and his son would no doubt be monstrous gratified at the prospect of having some one to

quarrel with, to vary a little their eternal squabbles with each other.

“Walpole is the only one of the ministers who seems perfectly content with the present state of things; but if a man who has it all his own way is not satisfied, he must be the most unconscionable dog under the sun. He looks as jovial as a farmer after having secured an ample harvest: but the greater jollity, you may be sure, the more unsatisfactory would be the prospects of Jacobitism. Your old acquaintance St. John is in the field; but he is the fox who, having lost his tail in a trap, is persuading his friends to dispense with the same appendage. He is now in monstrous favour with Pulteney, Wyndham, and the rest of the patriots, who, if such members are not more useful to them than their heads, might, one would think, very easily be convinced of the possibility of doing without them.

“By the way, Walpole has a son just



entered Parliament—A young fellow, they say, of some parts—who, if not a wit himself, tries to be mistaken for one, by passing in a crowd of such—as a bad shilling passes in a handful of sterling coin. If Charles Townshend, and George Selwyn, Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, and Henry Conway, and other privileged jesters, happen to be following their customary occupation of being more merry than wise, you may be sure Horace Walpole has got amongst them, and, like a fly on a carriage-wheel, is mightily astonished at the dust he is kicking up around him. But this young fellow, it seems, must needs be a man of gallantry as well as a wit; and devotes himself to certain ladies, who are well known for the favour they bestow on all young gentlemen of his merit and enterprise.

“I have almost forgotten to tell you what bargains I have secured at the China bazaar—amongst others, a pair of the greatest treasures of monstrous griffins ever seen in

London, which I carried off in spite of the opposition of two Duchesses, a Countess, and an Admiral's widow. Since when I have had the misfortune to break one, and I shall be inconsolable till I match it. If there should be any good old china procurable at Rome, pray try what you can do for me. I give you full directions to buy up all the griffins in the place, rather than lose a chance of matching my matchless monstrosity.

“I leave till the last the most important part of my communication. All persons known to profess feelings in favour of the Chevalier are so strictly watched by the emissaries of the Government, that it is almost impossible for one to perform any particular service without its immediately becoming known. It struck me, that we must have the aid of some one totally unknown to the usurper's innumerable spies; and a happy thought brought me the image of my niece Arabella, of whose talents and

acquirements I have heard such favourable notices. If you can send her to England, rely on it she will find a home under my roof, and I will take especial care of her welfare and yours. Think of this:—A residence in London may be of vast advantage to the child's prospects. But if you send her, be sure you don't forget the griffin. Remember; I must have a griffin at any price.

“From your loving Sister,

“DOROTHY FURBELOWE.”

“P.S. DEAR BROTHER.—I can't procure any good snuff. I prefer right Spanish when I can get it; but I suppose you have plenty at Rome of the best sort. Popes and Cardinals are not likely to tickle their holy noses with rubbish. Get me a pound or two, with a good stock of pulvillio and citron-water. I have got the most adorable little pug you ever saw; but my monkey is a sad mischievous rogue—he is so

bent on pulling off people's periwigs, that I shall be obliged to keep him out of the way of my visitors. I trust the King is well, and likewise the Holy Father—these names my Protestant friends associate with another personage, with whom they may probably some day be on more intimate terms. Do not fail to name my ideas to his Majesty respecting the necessity of striking a great blow: but of all things pray don't forget the griffin.—D. F.”

The perusal of this strange document excited various feelings in the breast of Arabella Falkland; but the passage relating to Horace Walpole made a deep and lasting impression. She now shewed a remarkable eagerness to fulfil her father's wishes in every respect. It was impossible to have met with a more devoted Jacobite, or a more loyal adherent to the phantom of British Sovereignty, then with so much difficulty kept up at Rome. Politics appeared

completely to have dethroned Love in her affections. Her pride had been wounded by the assumed levity of her lover, who, although he had, at her own request, parted from her absolutely and for ever, she fancied committed an unpardonable offence, in so readily availing himself of his freedom to shew how completely he had thrown off her influence.

Arabella Falkland from that day became an enthusiastic adherent of the Stuarts. She haughtily determined to forget the unworthy son of the detested minister. In a future page we shall see how this determination was fulfilled.



## CHAPTER IX.

## THE PORTENTOUS QUARREL.

WE all know the oft-quoted passage, from the source of nine-tenths of our most familiar quotations, illustrative of the peculiar ways in which greatness is acquired. Whether Sir Robert Walpole achieved his, or had it thrust upon him, we cannot now stop to inquire: but certain it is, he might, at the period we are illustrating, have been pronounced the greatest man in England.

Judging from appearances, greatness now-

a-days is made up of very curious elements. One achieves it by doing little things on a great scale, and another by doing great things in some new, marvellous, little way. Greatness in parliament looks rather to majorities than to eloquence, and has its foundation on a happy facility in shifting its principles ; so that it has no fixed position, but stands on the pivot of expediency, which turns round as by the operation of some shifting magnet, concealed from the public eye.

Greatness in the legal profession embodies qualities which, in any other, could not fail of being regarded as infamous. The man who, for a great hire, defends, by his oratory and knowledge of the law, murderers and wretches of the most depraved character, and dies after having realised a fortune and secured a peerage, is pronounced a great lawyer.

In the profession of a physician, greatness seems to reside in a certain aptitude for

assuming the most marvellous properties in the simplest agents. One ventures to appear as a ministering angel with a medicine chest of the most approved poisons ; whilst another finds his whole pharmacopœia in a glass of cold water.

In literature we have greatness under various aspects—sometimes springing up in a night, like Jonah's gourd—sometimes rotting in a day, like a diseased potato. One instance has recently been very prominently brought before us, in a certain foreign writer pretending to the rank of an historian, and putting forth his claims to greatness in the able manner in which he seeks to “feed fat the ancient grudge” of his countrymen against England. If M. Thiers can be allowed the style and title of “Great,” he must share it with his illustrious predecessors in the same style of composition—Ferdinand Mendez Pinto, and Baron Munchausen.

In science, we are permitted to gather our

ideas of greatness from the exaggerated notions of modern scientific philosophy. Every man seems to be looking at everything through Lord Rosse's monster telescope. They turn it in the direction of the past, and they see nothing but stupendous Megatheriums, and immeasurable Saurians. They shew the fossil tail of an extinct monstrosity, possessing more joints than the caudal extremity of a certain Irish member, which is long enough to astonish even Lord Monboddo. If these prodigious discoveries constitute a just and proper claim to greatness, then these philosophers must be content to share it with the first discoverer of the American sea-serpent.

In art, greatness also has been looked upon as an affair of size rather than skill. The man who painted pictures of so Brobdignagian a character, as each to require nearly an acre of wall to itself, was, of course, a much greater painter than he whose feeble talents found ample space in a three-quarter or a kit-cat. The vastness of his genius will

not allow him, like such humble scrubs as Titian and Vandyke, to delineate single objects ; he paints whole Houses of Commons on one canvass—nay, his passion for the multitudinous has led him to embark in such many-headed monsters as City festivals and Royal Christenings.

We have even heard that this taste has proceeded to such an extent, that a pictorial Knight of *great* celebrity has taken for a subject a review of the Household troops in Hyde Park, in which every figure is to be a portrait, and all warranted likenesses, from the humblest drummer-boy up to the Commander-in-Chief. To make the picture a greater bargain, the average number of spectators will be “thrown in ;” as a few thousand persons, more or less, cannot be of the slightest importance, the artist having as great a facility in manufacturing figures, as Babbage’s calculating machine.

The greatness of a minister, however, is a very different matter to the greatness of all



other great men. In our enlightened era, we might suppose it to consist of a daily roasting in the newspapers—a weekly squibbing from Punch—an incessant bombardment from those heavy batteries, the Quarterly Reviews—and an ever-varying, never-failing *cut* at your physiognomy from the dexterous weapon of H. B. In this free country, a minister is everybody's game; and therefore it is that everybody lets fly at him. Let him do what he will, or go where he will, he must reconcile himself to facing a general discharge from arms of every calibre, from that monster ordnance, the Times, to the pop-gun of a fashionable novelist.

In the days of Sir Robert Walpole, matters, perhaps, were not quite so bad for the poor man. The English people had not arrived at a full knowledge of the extraordinary extent of abuse it was proper to give to the leader of the Government. They had not learned that a First Lord of the Treasury, like a sucking-pig, requires con-

stant basting. Nevertheless, if Sir Robert had not as careful a roasting, he found many assistants in the political *cuisine*, who provided for him as though he was a lobster, instead of a minister, by endeavouring to keep him in constant hot water. If there was not sufficient of this sort of thing to be had at the hands of his opponents, he was sure to find more than enough from one or other of his coadjutors.

The materials that form a Government, like those that make a salad, require judicious handling to render the mixture sufficiently homogeneous. Put in the oil of suavity as liberally as possible, you will not always prevent the vinegar of envy and jealousy from becoming predominant; and flavour your dish with all the Attic salt in the world, you cannot in every instance avoid the insipidity of mediocrity from spoiling its relish.

So it was with the Ministry of George II. Sir Robert Walpole gave strength, solidity,

and respectability to it. His genius inspired it with the vigorous vitality that had made itself manifest in all its actions. In a period of extraordinary peril, his spirit had been developed in every measure, and his skill had conducted it towards every triumph. In the sense Louis XIV. had arrogantly declared that he was the State, Sir Robert Walpole might have boasted that he was the Government.

The King was well aware of his qualifications. The able and amiable Queen Caroline on her death-bed had recommended—not the servant to the master, but the master to the servant; and, singularly enough, his Majesty regarded the recommendation as more binding than any promise that might then have been exacted from him. He subsequently placed himself in the hands of Walpole, with as much confidence in his talents as respect for his worth; and all the insinuations, and all the fierce attacks of his active enemies, could not in the slightest degree affect the

high opinion his royal master entertained of him.

This regard was exhibited too openly to be agreeable even to some of his coadjutors. In particular, one weak and pompous man, the Duke of Newcastle, saw in it a slight to his superior rank, and a neglect of his—what we may be allowed to style, *singular* knowledge in the science of government, that gave him vast offence. His Grace was not without a certain degree of power—and he had a brother, Henry Pelham, who also put forth no inconsiderable claims to statesmanship. He had also borough influence to a very large extent, and consequently a formidable band of political retainers.

With the Duke of Newcastle, the machinations of the subtle Bolingbroke had already commenced, and in an indirect manner he had so worked upon the pride and vanity of his Grace, that the Pelham blood was in a state of fermentation, and in both himself and his brother only waited the proper

moment for displaying itself to effect the overthrow of their political chief. Bolingbroke, in the course of his philosophical studies, had learned the value of the adage, *Divide et impera*, and was bent on working the destruction of the man he hated, by detaching from his party so important a section of it as these shallow Pelhams.

Sir Robert had a more attached associate, and a much nearer connection, in his coadjutor and brother-in-law, Lord Townshend; a nobleman who had passed the best part of his life in the service of the State, had enjoyed much of the confidence of the late King, and, for a Minister, might be said to have possessed more than the average degree of honesty. He had early embraced the cause of the Hanoverian succession, and in troublous times had supported it with much energy and a respectable degree of talent.

The failing of Lord Townshend was warmth of temper. He was a man of attainments very superior to those of the



feeble Duke of Newcastle; and Lord Bolingbroke knew that the arts that would succeed with his Grace, would be quite thrown away upon his Lordship. His only hope of detaching him from his brother-in-law, existed in the chance of the Prime Minister doing or saying something that should irritate the irritable Secretary of State, so as to cause a permanent breach between them.

They were in the habit of meeting almost daily at the house of a mutual friend in Cleveland Row, near St. James's Palace. Of this Lord Bolingbroke had notice, through one of his numerous confederates. He also learned the extremely friendly—nay, even affectionate terms in which the brothers-in-law continued to live with each other. The philosopher was in despair; for although the Secretary of State was extremely irritable, it so happened that the Prime Minister was a man of boundless good humour. However ready the other might be to take

offence, he appeared the last man in the world capable of giving it.

It chanced that they had agreed to meet, as usual, to consider together some important measure that was about to be submitted to the King in Council. Sir Robert had been detained by the King considerably beyond his time. Now, if there was one thing likely to put Lord Townshend out of temper, it was being kept waiting. He was a man who knew the value of time, and could not endure to see it squandered.

The suite of drawing-rooms in Cleveland Row were as prettily furnished, according to the prevailing taste, as could have been expected in the residence of a man of fashion. There were ugly pictures on the walls, and ugly china ornaments on the chimneypieces, ugly mirrors, and an ugly carpet, with the usual allowance of ugly chairs, tables, and corner cupboards.

An elderly man of gentlemanly appear-

ance, with features marked by a very evident impatience, was seated on a chair near one of the windows, apparently listening to some observations from a round smooth-faced personage, whose features were eloquent of shallowness and self-conceit, while his manners were meant to be the perfection of courtly bearing, mingled with a vast affectation of confidence and personal regard. The elder of the two appeared to be listening: but in fact he gave scarcely any attention to his companion; his thoughts were bearing, with a very unpleasant intensity, on the unpleasant fact, that he had been kept waiting half an hour.

These two individuals were Lord Townshend, the Secretary of State, and Bubb Doddington, Esq.—a person, as we have already stated, believed to be the chief confidant and adviser of the Prince of Wales: but although Mr. Doddington had no objection whatever to be in the confidence of the Heir Apparent, he chose

to entertain a sort of sneaking kindness for the principal ministers of the King. In short, he was one of those far-seeing men who prepare themselves for all emergencies. He sought to provide for every possible contingency with so much care, that even if the whole world should be turned topsy turvy, Bubb Doddington would fall upon his legs.

It was curious to denote the gathering impatience spreading like a cloud over the fine features of Lord Townshend, and observe, at the same time, the suavity and devotion that made the inexpressive features of his companion so very expressive. Mr. Bubb Doddington had a great regard for my Lord Townshend; indeed, he took the trouble of asserting, that his attachment to his Majesty was unabated, notwithstanding he had been driven into the arms of the Opposition by a refusal of his claims to a peerage, to satisfy which in the son of an apothecary, as he was said to be,

seemed, according to the jocose expression of George Selwyn, “a *physic*-al impossibility.”

“Well, you see my Lord,” said Mr. Doddington, with great self-complacency, “it is not because I have the honour of being very much in the confidence of his Royal Highness—indeed, between ourselves, I doubt this confidential feeling on his part could be exceeded—for, no later than last night, his Royal Highness condescended to win two hundred pounds from me, at a very interesting game at cards he was so very good as to show me how to play. But it is not, as I was going to say, because I am so much in the confidence of the Prince, that I should be on ill terms with the Ministers of the Crown. Indeed I never felt more disposed than at present to cultivate a good understanding with his Majesty’s advisers — particularly with one so well esteemed of the King as my Lord Townshend.”



My Lord Townshend took no notice of the compliment.

“ I should have felt great pleasure,” continued the disappointed aspirant for a peerage, “ in meeeting so powerful a friend of his Majesty as Sir Robert Walpole; but then, I am well aware his time is so continually taken up, by the calls made upon it by his Majesty, that he is scarcely ever out of the royal closet.”

“ How do you know that?” sharply demanded his companion.

“ Oh, I ’ve reason to believe it ’s quite notorious.”

“ Have you?” gruffly remarked the Secretary of State.

“ Oh yes indeed!” exclaimed the other, “ Sir Robert, I have heard, is far from desirous of having it a secret. To be sure, it is expecting too much to think he would conceal what would prove to the world how much more the King thinks of him than of his colleagues.”

"You think so, do you?" demanded Lord Townshend, only kept from picking a quarrel with his companion, by recalling to his mind the gentleman's insignificance.

"I am not singular in my opinion, my Lord; that you may depend," continued Bubb Doddington. "It is a matter that excites a monstrous deal of observation. People marvel so experienced a statesman as my Lord Townshend should, apparently, be so little in his sovereign's estimation, as this monopoly of the royal attention by Sir Robert Walpole seems to warrant."

"They do, eh!" cried the Secretary of State, eyeing the figure of the Prince's counsellor from head to foot with certainly anything but a friendly scrutiny; and adding, with rather a heightened complexion, "Let me tell you, Mr. Bubb Doddington, I think all such people a pack of fools, and that it would be a monstrous deal better for them to mind their own business. Sir Robert Walpole's favour

with the King is well known, and creates no uneasiness among his friends, though I am well aware that it does amongst his enemies. What my colleagues may think of such preference, I cannot pretend to say; but at least *I* have no cause to be dissatisfied with it. His Majesty has given me no reason to imagine that my services have been overlooked; and as for Sir Robert, I feel satisfied he is not more with the King than is required by his high position in his Majesty's councils. However, perhaps it would be as well were you to bring this subject before his attention yourself; and as I expect him to enter the room every moment, you cannot have a better opportunity for satisfying your curiosity."

The apothecary's son vehemently disclaimed any curiosity; and as soon as he heard the Prime Minister's expected entrance into the house, it acted upon him as a spur to his own inclinations. He rose to depart, uttering a thousand professions of regard.

To these his companion paid very little attention. His spirits were a little ruffled. At any other time he would have immediately detected the *ruse* that was being played upon him, and laughed it to scorn. But notwithstanding he had met it with so much spirit, the insinuation sank deep into his heart; and the irritation he had been made to experience through the want of punctuality of his colleague, had increased tenfold, after he had heard his friend Doddington's allusions.

Scarcely had that gentleman taken his departure, when the voice of Sir Robert Walpole on the stairs announced his arrival; and the next moment he entered with a forced smile, and an abortive attempt at a little pleasantry.

There was a marked contrast in the appearance of the two ministers. Both were dressed in the Court suit of the time—the full ruffle—the well-arranged wig—the taper sword, and the buckled shoes, were alike in each. Their countenances, however, differed,

if their costume did not. The face of the First Lord of the Treasury beamed like a harvest-moon. No physiognomist would have suspected such pleasant features being the index of a mind made up of the most intricate machinery. The calmest lake in a valley, warmed by a glowing sun, never looked more bright and tranquil.

There was, however, a flush spreading over its broad disk, while entering the room with his cocked-hat under his arm, as his eye met the cold, and somewhat severe look of the irritated Secretary of State. His suspicions were excited. He had noticed Bubb Doddington, whom he not only knew to be an adviser of the Prince of Wales, but a connection of Bolingbroke's, stealthily leaving the house, apparently wishing to escape his recognition. The altered aspect of his brother-in-law assured him his wily enemy had been at work. At the same time Lord Townshend felt satisfied, from the confusion in his relative's countenance, that there



must be some sinister object in his long conference with the King; and every moment felt more disposed to demand why he, an old servant of the Crown, was treated with so little confidence.

This was exactly the state of things that the crafty Bolingbroke had laboured so cunningly to produce. He would have rubbed his hands in an ecstasy of secret congratulation, could he have perceived the complete success of his artifices.

“Townshend!” exclaimed the Prime Minister abruptly, “what was that fellow doing here?”

Now it so happened, that this was a style in which Lord Townshend had hitherto never been addressed by his brother-in-law, and he could attribute its unceremonious tone only to his being desirous of shewing the importance with which the King’s unbounded confidence invested him. The voice of authority grated harshly on the irritated nerves of the angry Secretary of State. He was not in a

humour to be dealt with in so offensive a manner. He fired up instantly when he fancied an affront was intended him—strode towards his brother-in-law, crossed his arms, looked him haughtily in the face, and replied, “What ’s that to you?”

“Oh, that ’s the state of the case, is it, my Lord?” said the other, coldly, “you must have carried on your secret negotiations some time, to enable you to throw off the mask so completely. Allow me to congratulate your Lordship on your improved prospects.”

“Zounds! Sir, what d’ye mean?” shouted the angry nobleman, in a voice of thunder.

“Oh, you are ashamed to acknowledge it,” exclaimed the Prime Minister. “Then I suppose I must inform you, that I am aware of your intrigue, cleverly as it has been carried on. But let me tell your Lordship, as the song says,

‘It ’s as well to be off with the old love,  
Before you are on with the new.’”

"I care nothing for your old song—I know nothing of your intrigue," answered the Secretary of State, sharply.

"My Lord," observed the other, with a contemptuous expression too evident to be mistaken, "for once, there is no man's sincerity whom I so much doubt as your Lordship's."

This was adding fuel to the fire. To Lord Townshend, the conscious superiority, as shewn in the cold, quiet tone of his brother-in-law, was bad enough; but the severe reflection on his veracity which was expressed in his words, was intolerable. A man of less command over his temper would have been excused a little intemperance upon such provocation, therefore an explosion from so irritable a person might have been anticipated.

"Zounds! you old rascal!" cried his Lordship, passionately, "what do you mean by that?"

"Do I live to be called rascal by such

a superannuated scoundrel as you?" was the equally passionate reply.

The angry old men, excited beyond the bounds of reason, simultaneously seized each other with both hands violently by the collar; and, as completely forgetting their exalted position as their near relationship, shook away with all their force.

They appeared more like two fierce bulldogs, intent on worrying each other to death, than the well-bred gentlemen they had seemed a minute since—every moment, by some coarse appellation or insulting remark, adding fresh energy to their fierce passions; till, recollecting they were able to settle their quarrel in a more becoming manner, they let go their holds of their coat-collars, to seize the handles of their swords.

"Come on, villain!" shouted the Secretary of State, drawing his sword with a look that threatened instant extermination.

"Defend yourself, hypocrite!" cried the Prime Minister, panting with furious excitement.

In an instant their blades crossed, and in another the blood of one or both of them might have been dyeing the carpet, had not the door been hastily pushed open, and several persons in the house, alarmed by the noise, rushed in and separated them.

The sight of the intruders seemed to waken the combatants to some sense of the impropriety, if not to the folly of their conduct, in squabbling and fighting in another person's house; and they were so far pacified as to discontinue the contest, though their mutual animosity was far from being allayed.

"Another time, fellow, and another place!" cried Lord Townshend, as some friends were hurrying him out of the room. Sir Robert Walpole was not permitted to take any notice of the menace. He was in the arms of his younger son, who was manifesting the most lively anxiety in his behalf.

It so happened that he had not long entered the house with his friend George



Selwyn, whose family were its inmates, when his attention was attracted by the loud sounds of angry altercation so near him. He recognized his father's voice with a strange tumult of excited feelings; but it was only when he became aware that the quarrel was proceeding to acts of personal violence, that he felt he dared risk an intrusion. He rushed with his companions into the scene of the conflict just in time to prevent mischief.

The greatest shock to his feelings, however, he soon found in what he considered the coldness of his father. Sir Robert was not quite well pleased at being found by his son under circumstances so little creditable to his understanding. He felt he had been acting very like a fool, and something like a madman; and, in return for his son's solicitude, he could not avoid testifying a good deal of dissatisfaction with himself, which the sensitive young man, when he quitted him, felt assured had been intended for him.

The quarrel between the first Lord of the

Treasury and the Secretary of State, was attended with the result most agreeable to that political engineer who was so busy undermining the power of Sir Robert Walpole. Lord Townshend sent in his resignation the same day; and though in his calmer moments he could not bring himself to enter into a deadly conflict with so near a relative, his angry spirit was not to be reconciled into acting under his directing influence: he retired altogether from public life.

## CHAPTER X.

THE *HEIR* AND MANY FRIENDS.

LADY ARCHIBALD HAMILTON was one of those remarkably clever women, who fancy themselves possessed of a patent which raises them above public opinion. She dressed *à-la-mode*—she gave parties—she visited—she went to every kind of public entertainment; and when she had tired of shewing herself to the town, went through the same series of follies and gaieties at Bath, Scarborough, and Tunbridge Wells; delud-

ing herself with the belief that she had passed everywhere for a respectable character.

But leaving out of the question her Ladyship's more than equivocal position with the Prince of Wales, there were certain rumours afloat in connection with her name, that often gave it, in the eyes of the moralist, an extremely ugly complexion. Her house was a very gay house—but there was not much in that: the houses of other ladies of fashion might just as well be called gay. Then there was a good deal of what the fashionable world called gallantry, believed to be carried on there: this too might be said of the houses of many other ladies of quality. Added to which, it was reported that play was permitted in her apartment, which, though it bore the name of high, in a more moral sense deserved to be considered as low as roguery could sink it.

There is a natural buoyancy in some people, that prevents them sinking where others

could not avoid instant destruction. A man will jump off a bridge with heavy stones in his pocket, and presently rise to the surface with all the buoyancy of a cork—no doubt to hear the satisfactory proverb which ensures security from drowning to those who are born to a more ignominious end.

So was it with Lady Hamilton. Her offences were heavy enough to have prevented Lady Archibald ever getting her head above water in the world, after her plunge into its unfathomable vortex; but in her Ladyship's "lightness" existed her safety. She floated on bravely upon the roughest waves. Heavy as she had made herself, she could not drown. She was received almost everywhere—her rooms were crowded with company, and she had always around her more admirers than she knew how to dispose of—notwithstanding that there was unquestionably a deal of philanthropy in her disposition.



Lady Archibald was peculiarly partial to the society of young men of fortune; and if they were also young men of wit and spirit, her partiality became more demonstrative. It might be thought that these partialities would have been offensive to her princely lover; but he also had a peculiar partiality for the young fellows about town who had plenty of money, and could render themselves pleasant company, and he encouraged rather than disapproved of her taste in that direction. How much her card-tables were affected by this predilection, it is impossible to say—though it is well known to us, that at Lady Hamilton's the Prince was a pretty constant card-player—and, singular to relate, always a fortunate one.

Possibly, however, the possession of wealth was only insisted on to make certain of the respectability of her guests—for in those days riches, if not accompanied by rank, were held by persons in such a posi-

tion in society, that their respectability was recognized as a matter of course. It was not then the custom for persons in trade to assume the rank of gentlemen: for such to take upon themselves the title of Esquire—so common an assumption in the present day—would have been regarded as an enormity equal to that of exercising the privilege of franking a letter without enjoying the necessary qualification.

Perhaps, then, with Lady Hamilton and her royal lover, to be well off, was but another form of the phrase to be well born; and the condition of being witty was doubtless merely put forth to secure them entertaining companions. Her Ladyship delighted to have round her the sons of the most determined opponents of the Prince of Wales. Such visits were usually clandestine; nevertheless she encouraged them. She believed the power of her attractions was shewn by their risking these stolen visits. But it was rather the

fashion to visit the Prince of Wales's mistress; and more than one father winked at his son going there, from a prudent desire to obtain, whilst they retained the favour of the King, a channel of communication to that of the Heir Apparent.

It was evening. The handsome suite of apartments was thronged with what, by courtesy, was styled the best company. The rooms were as well lighted as a liberal supply of wax-lights could effect that object, and seemed furnished in what was then considered "the first style"—a style, however, which a banker's wife of the present day would turn up her extremely genteel nose at, for the very little evidence of taste it afforded. Even the projecting Cupids that supported the branches held before the mirrors, were ugly, awkward, and excessively vulgar—they better fulfilled the idea of sucking pugilists, than of the immortal child whose beauty, grace, and refinement have been represented so often by the most gifted

painters, sculptors, and poets, that have ever existed.

The paintings on the walls were not in much better taste. There was a legendary picture of St. George, either by Paul Veronese or Tintoretto, in which it was difficult to say which had the most dragonish countenance—the creature that had been slain by the Saint, or the Princess he had delivered from it. Venetian painters had evidently as singular notions respecting the female form and countenance, as the carvers of looking-glass frames had of those of the God of Love. It was no unusual thing in their representations, to see a Venus with a club foot, or a Madonna that might readily be mistaken for a Medusa. Such monstrosities were to be found in many a nobleman's mansion in England. Indeed, just at that period there was a general desire exhibited amongst the higher classes to collect objects of *vertû*, as they were called.

But these were not the only libels on

creation. Lady Hamilton was wise in her generation. She was not a woman of surpassing loveliness, but she sagaciously chose to be fascinating by comparison, and therefore her China shepherdesses, quite as much as her pictorial deities, appeared to be as ugly as art could make them. Thus surrounded, it may readily be conceived that her ladyship appeared to very great advantage.

Near the door of the principal drawing-room, a group of young men stood, very busily employed in the operation of quizzing the company. Now quizzing is a very scientific process, and requires no slight talent to proceed with it in the proper *formula*. We see nothing extraordinary in the great popularity it has always enjoyed. It must be popular, because it is cheap—the amusement it affords us being always at the expense of other people.

“I say, Charley,” said the handsome Captain Conway to one of his companions, a dashing young fellow of his own age, who



shortly afterwards, as the well-known Charles Townshend, made a name in society which threatened to eclipse the reputation of even his most brilliant contemporaries, "what is Bubb Doddington doing up in that corner with the Prince? He seems mighty confidential."

"Oh!" said the youthful wit, very readily, "Bubby, you must know, has made up his mind to be a peer of the realm. He has no chance with the King, so he has fastened himself on the Heir Apparent; and his dreams by night, and his thoughts by day, are devoted to the consideration of the title that is most desirable he should adopt, for he has already got the Prince's promise to ennoble him."

"That's easier said than done," remarked Sir Charles Hanbury Williams; "till figs are found on thorns, and grapes on thistles, it is a little too much to expect that any one can perform such an impossibility as to ennoble Bubby."

"It 's well known Bubby's father was an apothecary," continued Charles Townshend, "so I think we had better suggest to him the title of Baron Gallipot."

"Let him have a double title to correspond with his double face," said Selwyn, turning up the whites of his drowsy eyes, "he might then bear the appropriate name of Viscount Pestle and Mortar."

"But then he'll want a coat of arms," observed Horace Walpole, who formed one of the group.

"Oh, that 's easily found," replied Charles Townshend, "three draughts sable, on a field vert, quarterly."

"Very green, indeed," exclaimed Henry Conway.

"The three draughts ought to be daily, instead of quarterly," said Selwyn, "I'm sure no doctor would let me off for less."

"Three draughts sable, on a field vert, in the first and third quarters," repeated the other, "with two leeches proper, in a bordure

for the others. In an escutcheon of pretence, a squirt rampant."

"But then he must have supporters," observed the Captain.

"Oh, for supporters, we'll give him an old woman regardant, armed with a rushlight in her dexter hand, on the sinister side; and on the dexter, an undertaker couchant, bearing a coffin of his own colours."

"And for the crest?" inquired Horace, laughing as much as the rest.

"A death's head and cross bones, of course."

"Now you've forgot the motto."

"Oh, that suggests itself. It should be in a label—not attached to the draught; that would be more medicinal than heraldic—but in a scroll under the armorial bearings, and should be in Old English characters—**'When taken to be well shaken.'**"

It was well that Bubb Doddington was too intently occupied in detailing to Prince Frederick the result of his interview with

Lord Townshend, to notice this mischievous group, or he might have suspected himself to be the subject of their conversation, from the expressive looks they were directing towards him. Had he been near enough to hear the liberty they were taking with his foible, the embryo nobleman would have felt overwhelmed with mortification.

“Lady Archie is looking very earnestly towards you, Horace,” exclaimed Sir Charles; “if you have a mind to enter the lists with a Prince of the Blood, I think there ’s an opening for you.”

“I’ faith you may say that very safely,” said Charles Townshend, “but the opening is by no means so exclusive as you would infer. It’s a kind of breach practicable for either horse or foot.”

“I am in doubt whether I shall take advantage of it,” replied Horace Walpole, “even should it be as inviting as you describe. I am not sure I have sufficient courage to volunteer on so dangerous a service.”

“Who is that tall anatomy of a man with whom she is now engaged in conversation?” inquired Captain Conway.

“Oh, that ’s General Pipeclay; a highly meritorious officer, who, as you may judge from his height, has been *long* in the service,” replied George Selwyn, in his drowsiest manner. “I don’t think it possible, however much he may be in battle henceforth, that he should ever receive so much as a flesh wound,—as it is obvious enough he has no flesh to receive it in. He is a hero, not in miniature, but in skeleton. I never look at the General, when I find him in such close confabulation with our hostess, without fancying I am gazing upon a couple of uncouth figures that have walked out of some old Dutch print of ‘Death and the Lady.’” This was an amazing effort for Selwyn, and he again sank into his customary torpor.

“By Jove, there is Lady Caroline Peter-sham!” cried Sir Charles, directing the attention of the rest to a very pretty, and



evidently very fashionable woman, who had just then entered the drawing room; "Our friend Lady Archie has not, I fancy, shewn her usual prudence in inviting so attractive a rival."

"Well, if she has shewn her usual *imprudence*, there can be no doubt she has shewn quite enough," drawled George Selwyn.

"What next, I wonder!" cried young Townshend, as he caught sight of the well-known figure of Lord Bolingbroke making his way through the well-dressed crowd, with a most liberal display of courteous recognitions to all around, apparently to join the group about the Prince.

"What next?" echoed Hanbury Williams. "What could you expect after such a Dr. Faustus, but his instructor?"

"Oh, as to that, I have very great doubts," observed Captain Conway, "I have a mighty shrewd suspicion he 's not the Doctor, because—"

“ You never took him to be such a conjuror,” said Charles Townshend, hastily.

“ Not exactly,” replied the young Captain, “ But I think he ’s so devilish deep, he must be—you understand—the other personage.”

“ *The Devil he is!*” exclaimed George Selwyn, with a ludicrous emphasis that created a general laugh, as he appeared to rouse himself out of a dream.

Horace Walpole gazed with a great deal of interest upon that clever intriguer, whom, from certain information that had lately reached him, he had learned to regard as his father’s bitterest enemy ; and as he looked upon him, a sense of dislike amounting to hostility took possession of his whole nature. It seemed to have become a part of his religion, that his father’s enemy should be his own ; and that the first article of his faith was, To like those who liked him, and hate those who hated him.

“ Come, Horace, what makes you stare so at Bolingbroke ?” said Captain Conway,

drawing his friend a little way from the group, "You 've not paid so much attention to my nonsense, as to marvel what the old gentleman has done with a certain appendage with which it is believed he invariably goes into company? Come, that 's Pulteney he 's talking to—you 'll attract attention if you stare at him so rudely."

Pulteney!—another of those whom he had so lately learned to hold in the most absolute detestation. Another enemy of Sir Robert Walpole, and one almost as formidable as Lord Bolingbroke. He wished to linger and observe them both, that he might have every feature so thoroughly impressed upon his memory, he could recal the image whenever he desired to gratify his hatred at its expense. But his kinsman hurried him away, and took off his attention by talking of himself and his own prospects. He had been promised promotion, was appointed aide-de-camp to the Duke of Cumberland, and expected to be summoned to join his regiment to embark

for the seat of war. Some hard fighting, he said, might be expected, from the temper and preparations of the hostile armies, and, as he meant to distinguish himself, it would not be at all improbable that he should get knocked on the head, or at least lose a limb.

“But then you know, Horace, my boy,” exclaimed the young soldier, in his most consolatory tone, “if the worst comes to the worst, there ’s satisfaction in knowing there ’s no worst to endure after it: and I shall die in the bed of Honour—which is, of course, the most desirable death a soldier could meet with. What the deuce else I could wish for, I don’t know! And then you know, supposing I get off with only the loss of a limb—which will be a singular instance of good fortune—there can’t be a doubt that a wooden leg costs a deal less money to provide for than a natural one: should my loss be an arm—if I can do nothing else with my empty sleeve, I can laugh in it. You see, as I am constantly

telling you, I always look at the bright side of things."

Here the curious argument was interrupted by a female voice, from a lady who had approached them unobserved.

"I have been waiting a monstrous time, Captain Conway, for you to introduce your friend."

"Oh, a thousand pardons, Lady Archibald," cried the gallant Captain, eagerly; "By Jove, we were just talking of you. Lady Archibald—my friend Horace Walpole; Horace—Lady Archibald Hamilton."

The lady went through the ceremony in her most fascinating manner,—and, to do her justice, she could appear a very charming woman. The gentleman sought to prepossess the lady in his favour; and his appearance was so very much in his favour, that, with such a connoisseur of what was gentleman-like as he had before him, he was sure of making more than ordinary impression. They regarded each other with much



more attention than strangers usually display on meeting for the first time; but then Horace Walpole knew that he stood before one of the most powerful agents of the strong party then in violent opposition to his father. She was on the list of those he felt especially called upon to hate.

Lady Archibald knew that she was in the presence of a son of the man whose influence, her friends averred, was most prejudicial to her interests as a politician: therefore, she must look upon him as no common personage. Lady Archibald also saw that the young stranger had a pleasing manner, and possessed a pair of eyes that seemed to promise a devout worshipper. As a woman of gallantry, she could not avoid regarding him with more than usual attention.

“I haven’t a doubt you ’ll like each other desperately on better acquaintance,” continued the young officer, as the parties he had made known to each other were ex-

pressing the customary civilities, "it 's against orders from Head Quarters, perhaps, to make you acquainted; but then I don't suppose Horace will join your Ladyship's forces: and, monstrous agreeable as I have always found your Ladyship, I have my doubts you could fascinate him so completely, as to make him forget his allegiance to his own banner."

A good deal of amusing badinage followed on this subject, in which Lady Hamilton contrived to express many things that ought to have been gratifying to any young gentleman with a disposition for gallantry, and in which Horace Walpole did not forget to commend himself, by the utterance of such agreeable sentiments as are the customary coin of conversation during an early acquaintance between well-bred individuals of the two sexes.

It was extremely singular that these two persons, who, from their peculiar positions, ought to have been irreconcilable foes, im-

pressed on each other sentiments, which, if they might not be styled favourable, were of such a nature as to render it as great an injustice to call it unfavourable.

The son of the Prime Minister thought he had never before seen eyes so truly eloquent—they seemed gifted with the faculty, as fine writers call it, “of peering into the soul:” and he observed with the same pleasure, a peculiar modulation of the voice that appeared to be as full of meaning as of music. The mistress of the Heir Apparent acknowledged that she had never come in contact with a mind apparently so fresh, so full of resources, and so refined. She pretended to cultivate a taste for the elegant and classical—a taste, however, which she found very few opportunities for encouraging in the inelegant and unclassical society it had been her misfortune that her lot should be cast.

The friends of Horace Walpole marvelled immensely when they beheld Lady Archibald Hamilton, after they had interchanged

compliments, take the young Member's arm : and, as the company made way on all sides, with every symptom of outward respect, he was seen, with all the appearance of the most devoted cavalier, proceeding with her to the further end of the room.

"Lady Hamilton must surely be a very estimable person," observed her cavalier, with the most gallant air he could assume.

"You think so from seeing so many people here," replied the lady laughingly ; "but depend on 't, it 's only a new version of the old fable of the Hare and many Friends."

"Why, I have been led to suppose that the *Heir* has something to do with it," remarked her companion, hazarding an allusion to her ladyship's connection with the Prince of Wales. The lady laughed unabashed, and as if she was extremely amused with the idea.

"Mighty good, Sir, mighty good!" she exclaimed, "and you are not far wrong. I

believe I am in a great measure indebted to his Royal Highness for the popularity I enjoy;" and then she added in a more confidential tone, "An obligation, by the way, which I have incurred solely from the agreeable prospect it holds out to me of being able to serve the deserving. I believe I have a great deal of influence in that quarter; but I must confess it's monstrous dull work endeavouring to make such an uninteresting mortal take the interest he ought, in what should most command it."

Here the lady sighed, as if she felt her position to be anything but satisfactory, or else as if to intimate that she had feelings that were not to be controlled by her ambition.

"Assuredly you may lay claim to the happiness of boasting amongst your admirers the many distinguished men I observe around you," said Horace Walpole.

"I make no claim to happiness, and I never boast," replied Lady Hamilton, in a



tone of voice that might be called pathetic; “and as for my numerous admirers, as you are pleased to call them, they are summer flies swarming to the honey-pot. They know well enough that I am not the honey, but the worthless vessel that contains it. I care not for such admirers, you may depend. One honest heart is worth whole hecatombs of such time-servers.”

The lady again sighed. Her young cavalier ought to have been satisfied that his fair companion was an object that commanded his best sympathies. He certainly was very young, and rather inexperienced in the world; but he felt he had too much at stake to allow a diversion of his feelings from what he considered was their legitimate object. If Lady Archibald Hamilton was an enemy of his father's, it was obvious she must be an enemy of his. At any rate, he should ever regard her with hostility.

These reflections were interrupted by their reaching the group about the Prince of

Wales, that immediately made way, as the favourite and her companion approached. She whispered that she was about to introduce him, and that he was to be sure and exercise his own sagacity in observing whether such an individual, exalted though he might be, could satisfy the heart of a woman possessed of any sensibility.

Horace Walpole was at first a little surprised at the cordiality of his reception. If he had been the most influential of his supporters, instead of the son of his most powerful opponent, the Prince could not have exhibited greater kindness of manner towards him. An indifferent observer, seeing the affectionate interest he displayed so winningly to the young Member, might have been induced to set him down as one of the most amiable of men. But such amiability, unfortunately, too often forms the bulk of the stock in trade of the high and mighty.

Civility is a cheap virtue, which, if it becomes a pedlar, must still more become a

prince. To smile, and make complimentary speeches to their inferiors, form by far the greater part of "The Whole Duty," not of man, but of the great man. Pity it is that appearances are so deceitful,—that, like the soap-bubble, it has such a very charming effect, but—there is nothing in it. A great man condescends to make himself as agreeable as possible to a little one, as mechanically as he washes his face to become as agreeable as possible to himself. The little man departs, and with him vanishes all interest in his concerns, as completely as if he had never existed.

Prince Frederick questioned our hero concerning his travels, and what he had observed, and appeared to be extremely delighted with the accounts he elicited respecting the great cities of Italy, and their works of art. Young Walpole was something of an enthusiast in art, and could not avoid, whilst upon the subject, displaying, not only what he knew, but what he felt. The speaker shortly

found himself the centre of an admiring group of listeners, prominent amongst whom were Pulteney, Marchmont, Bubb Doddington, Lord Bolingbroke, Shippen, Lord Cartaret, and Sandys.

Presently the conversation became general; and if a moment since he felt any surprise at being an object of attention to a circle composed of his father's bitterest enemies, his astonishment was most profound when he remarked that they all treated him with as much appearance of personal esteem as if he were an attached friend of some twenty years' standing.

The Minister's son had an abundant field on which to employ his powers of observation, but of course the chief object in it was the Heir Apparent, and towards him he directed the principal share of his attention. The manners of his Royal Highness were certainly extremely conciliatory, but this did not prevent the observer from discovering that his mind was very shallow, and as little

benefited by education as any intellect in his father's dominions.

The Prince shortly afterwards proceeded to play at *whisk*, having Lady Archibald for a partner, against Bubb Doddington and Lord Bolingbroke; and as, in the excitement of play, he became less on his guard, the same shrewd observer could not fail of detecting a certain looseness of principle, and an apparent absence of all high or honourable sentiment, that as ill became his rank, as his cordiality became it well.

The conduct of the philosopher of Dawley towards the son of his hated rival, formed a fine study for the student of human nature. The Prince chose to retain his new acquaintance near him; a position by no means disagreeable to that young gentleman, as it enabled him to receive all the little condescensions of his Royal Highness, as well as all the greatly expressive glances of his Royal Highness's mistress.

Bolingbroke took advantage of every op-



portunity of ingratiating himself with young Walpole. In the pauses of the game, when the deal was going on, he was almost sure to address him, or express some observation which could only be intended for his ear. And what he said seemed so very much to the purpose, so profound or so brilliant, so philanthropic or so just, that it could not fail of its due effect on a well educated mind. A stranger, with his intelligence untouched by any opposing influences, must have felt singularly prejudiced in favour of so admirable a converser; but Horace Walpole never lost sight of the conviction that he was in the presence of his father's bitterest enemies, and consequently all their fascinations were unavailing.

Bubb Doddington, too, was equally intent on making himself agreeable; but unfortunately for him, in the society of such a spirit as that of Bolingbroke, his qualities, whatever they were, could not come forth so prominently as he wished. With all the

desire in the world to take a leading part, he not only found himself obliged to play second fiddle, but forced to play in so very subdued and modest a manner, that his performance, he had reason to fear, would go for little or nothing—much too just an appreciation to be satisfactory.

Whether it was in consequence of the Prince winning the odd trick—an extraordinary triumph, considering he had such an experienced trickster as Bolingbroke for an opponent—or from his Royal Highness not having expended his stock of civility, certain it is, at the conclusion of the game, the Minister's younger son was again an object of friendly attention to the Heir Apparent. He rose from the card-table, and putting his arm familiarly within that of his young acquaintance, led him a little apart from the group.

Possibly the reader supposes Prince Frederick took that opportunity for confidentially hinting to the member for Callington

his Royal Highness's wishes respecting his political conduct, and held out some important inducement to lead him into connecting himself with the Prince's party. It is possible that Horace Walpole anticipated this. If he did so, never was man more completely disappointed. His Royal Highness led him out of earshot of his friends, and then with an air of profound confidence, and in a subdued whisper expressive of the intense interest he felt in the subject, he said, "Between you and I, Mr. Walpole, my Lord Bolingbroke did wrong, in that last trick but one, in playing the knave."

"I quite agree with your Royal Highness," replied the Minister's son, in the same earnest tone and manner, "my Lord Bolingbroke should *never have played the knave.*"

## CHAPTER XI.

BUBB DODDINGTON.

THE political horizon gave evidence of a storm brewing, that threatened to burst over the head of Sir Robert Walpole; and the quick-sighted affection of his younger son had already acquired sufficient knowledge of the atmosphere around him, to be aware of the tendency of the gathering clouds. But though his own observations assured him that mischief was impending, and the same conviction followed from the

investigations of his shrewd and useful dependent in a less direct channel, the sagacity of both was at fault when they sought to discover the exact shape in which this mischief was to disclose itself.

Horace Walpole expended much anxious thought in endeavouring to arrive at the secret the hostile party preserved so tenaciously. There could be no doubt that the clever and crafty Bolingbroke was the main-spring of this mysterious movement. It suited well his political engineering—this working in the dark. It was evident he was digging a mine, the object of which was to overthrow the administration of his rival by a sudden and overwhelming explosion. To keep Sir Robert in ignorance of its existence, was of the first importance to its success—hence the care with which the operations were masked from his observation.

The son of the Minister thought of applying to Lady Archibald Hamilton for the



information he sought ; but a moment's reflection satisfied him that their acquaintance was much too recent to allow of his hazarding a confession of his decided partiality for his father, to so zealous a Tory partizan as Prince Frederick's mistress. For notwithstanding the hints she had dropped of her position being irksome to her feelings, his were too strongly prejudiced against her as one of his father's enemies, to allow them to influence him ; though he was fully sensible of the advantage he might gain by keeping on a good understanding with her.

The active and agreeable Fibbs had contrived to make the acquaintance of more than one of those extensive depositaries of family secrets—housekeepers and ladies' maids—to whom his vivacity, good looks, foreign phrases, and travelled manners, were overpowering recommendations ; but the information he had elicited was so vague and uncertain, that nothing could be made of it.

He had given them to understand, in confidence, how monstrous tired he was of the Walpoles—how completely his opinions were at variance with the fusty notions of the present Government—and had even led them to believe that his young master was as tired of them as himself; but though he found no difficulty in making himself agreeable, he could not obtain the information of which he was in quest: in his search for the secret, there was an impediment in his way, upon which, with all his shrewdness, he had not calculated—it so happened, his fair companions did not know it themselves.

Horace Walpole was engaged in a particularly brown study, seated in a capacious arm-chair, in the well-supplied library in Arlington-street, when he was surprised by the servant suddenly announcing Mr. Bubb Doddington. In a moment afterwards Mr. Bubb Doddington, overflowing as it were with mingled suavity and importance, en-

tered the apartment. The Minister's son was at a loss for the motive of such a visit, as, though he recollected that the sleek, placid, self-conceited countenance, now advancing so cordially towards him, had come under his observation at the Prince's card-table, he recollected, also, that so little communication had passed between himself and that gentleman, that a visit from him the next morning was the last thing he should have anticipated.

At that moment, however, a reminiscence of the ridiculous coat of arms which the most brilliant of the Townshends had found for this nobleman expectant, caused such a smile to light up the young Member's features, that Mr. Doddington felt he had no reason to complain of his reception.

Notwithstanding, however, the happy self-satisfied look of his visitor, there was a certain uneasy expression about his sleepy eyes which would have convinced a Lavater that the particular friend of the Heir Apparent,

and the peer of the realm that was to be, was not quite contented with his present circumstances.

Whilst this ambitious courtier was paying his compliments, and expressing a host of apologies for his intrusion, his companion was speculating on the object of his visit; and he soon determined in his mind that the gentleman had come as an ambassador from the Prince, to propose some friendly arrangement arising out of the decided impression he had produced on his Royal Highness the previous evening.

It is almost needless to say, the speculator was very much in the wrong. The impression he flattered himself he had produced was too transient to afford the Prince a single after-thought upon the subject. Mr. Bubb Doddington was his own ambassador. To be sure, he was the confidential friend of the Heir Apparent, to whom he had the honour of lending his money and losing his money according as the whim of his Royal

Highness lay in the way of borrowing or of winning. But great as were these honours, they did not quite satisfy the ambition of the apothecary's son. He knew the Prince of Wales could promise—but he was quite as well aware the King could perform; and his gratification in being the companion of a Prince, and his desire to stand well with the Sovereign, often kept him oscillating like a pendulum, in the direction in which he fancied his interests predominated.

On the previous evening, after Prince Frederick had got rid of all his company, he entered into a long explanation of his intentions to his good-natured friend whose purse had been so convenient to him, in which he alarmed that oscillatory courtier prodigiously. It was evident to him that the Opposition were pushing the Prince forward to take up a position against his father, which could not but greatly embarrass those of his friends who sought to keep up a good understanding with the existing Ministry.



Bolingbroke had infused into the shallow mind of the Heir Apparent so fierce an hostility to his father's ablest Minister, that he was determined to do every thing in his power to drive him from the Government; and with this object in view, his Royal Highness was about to make a political demonstration supported by the whole power of the Tory party, strengthened by recruits from amongst the Minister's almost innumerable enemies. The timid time-server became alarmed. To take the part in this rash movement the Prince required him to do, appeared so full of peril to his own interests, that after a faint remonstrance, he thought it most advisable to provide for his own safety by opening communications with the Prime Minister, in which he purposed making favourable terms for himself by betraying the intentions of his master.

Horace Walpole listened with the most intense interest to the details of the grand plot his extremely friendly acquaintance of

the previous evening unfolded to him. The secret that had baffled him was at once in his power. The storm that was brewing over the head of Sir Robert Walpole betrayed the place where it was to break out. The Minister's son was careful not to lose an atom of this valuable information. "Forewarned is fore-armed." He knew the value of the proverb, and was fully resolved to prove its truth with as much dispatch as was practicable.

But the great attention he gave to the particulars that were being narrated to him by no means blinded him to the peculiarities and deficiencies of the narrator. The extreme candour, the excessive disinterestedness, the wonderful self-denial, of the Prince's very particular friend, in this timely communication to the son of the Minister, were not lost upon him.

"Then, if I understand you right," said Horace Walpole, particularly anxious that nothing should be misunderstood, "it is the

intention of the Prince of Wales to make a demand in Parliament for a jointure for the Princess, and £100,000 per annum for himself."

"Just so, my dear Sir, just so."

"And this, not only without the sanction of the father of his Royal Highness, but in as unquestionable a shape as possible, putting himself forward in opposition to his wishes, and in defiance of his authority?"

"That is the exact state of the case."

"And in this independent, or it might be called hostile movement, I am to understand that his Royal Highness counts on the support, not only of the Opposition party, but of several distinguished Whigs."

"Just what I said. Moreover, his Royal Highness, on my representing the risk he was running, and the very remote chance he had of success, stated his mind was made up, and that he counted on the assistance of the Dukes of Argyle and Dorset, and Lord Wilmington; and that Mr. Pulteney,

Lord Carteret, Lord Chesterfield, and Sir William Wyndham, were monstrous eager in the affair. His Royal Highness further stated that Lord Winchelsea had gone down to Petworth to bring the old Duke of Somerset to move the measure in the House of Lords, and that Mr. Sandys, Mr. Gibbon, or Sir John Barnard the financier, were likely to move the measure in the House of Commons."

This seemed a formidable enough confederacy; and the son of the man against whom it was directed, may be excused feeling more than a common interest in listening to the particulars.

"Surely," he said, "His Royal Highness must feel this daring hostility to his father to be exceedingly improper?"

"My dear Sir," replied the courtier with more than a courtier's suavity, "I represented to His Royal Highness—in fact I felt bound to do so, in consequence of the vast respect I have always entertained for his Majesty—

the false position in which he was placing himself by this public exhibition of unfilial feeling—and reminded him of the delicate state of his father's health."

"Which had its due weight with him, of course?"

"His Royal Highness was so good as to say," added the courtier, "that the King could not live many years, but might linger thus a good while; and he could not stay that while."

Horace Walpole did not make any remark at this startling exposition of royal affection, but it produced a strong impression on his mind. He presently made inquiries as to the feelings entertained towards this bold measure by the Prince's friends; and he succeeded in ascertaining that the desire of his Royal Highness to proceed to extremities with the King, even though a civil war were the consequence, had alarmed many quite as much as it had frightened Mr. Doddington—several drew back, not a few stood aloof,



and some of the wiser heads had ventured upon a remonstrance.

The worthy aspirant for a peerage said a great deal more respecting his own honour and conscience, and ended his confidential communication with a well-expressed hint, that it was in the power of his estimable friend, Sir Robert Walpole, always to command his best services in any affair that did not affect his principles. He then took his leave with an abundance of pretty compliments and encouraging prophecies to the very promising son of his estimable friend, who felt happier by a great deal than he had been for years, when he saw his visitor fairly out of the house.

“Quick, Fibbs, quick! A chair to the Treasury,” he exclaimed, hurriedly, as his valet answered his startling summons at the bell, “I have not a moment to lose: tell the fellows to carry me along as rapidly as they can put their feet to the ground.”

A very short time—though to his impa-

tient spirit it seemed an hour—sufficed to see him borne in a sedan, by a couple of stalwart Irishmen, in the direction of his father's official residence. The bearers had been well talked to by the valet, and well feed by the master, therefore it is but reasonable to imagine they did not allow the grass to grow under their feet—if any they found there—as they jogged along with their burthen. He passed the interval in recalling the particulars of the important statement he had just heard; and when he felt satisfied he had not forgotten the least item in the account, a glow of intense satisfaction suffused his whole system, as he reflected on the vast service he was about to do to his father.

That father, whose character he so revered—whose talents he looked upon with such enthusiastic admiration—whose position as the first Englishman of his age, seemed, to his excited fancy, higher than that of either King or Keyser—that father, he was about to save from the most imminent danger with

which his power had ever been threatened; for he knew the energy of that great mind, and the extent of its resources, too well, to doubt that, with so timely a knowledge of the conspiracy that the wily Bolingbroke had so skilfully formed, he would find any difficulty in defeating it.

Arrived at Whitehall, our hero learned with dismay that Sir Robert was engaged giving an audience to the French Ambassador, and could not be disturbed on any account. His son knew full well that every minute lost was an advantage to the enemy. His impatience, his excitement, his anxiety, became extreme, as he heard the quarters strike one after another by the time-piece in the waiting-room. He made several ineffectual efforts to induce one of the messengers to disturb his father, but they shook their heads with a look of alarm, as if the invitation was suggestive of nothing less than a prosecution for High Treason.

Horace execrated the iron rules of official

etiquette most heartily, as he paced the empty room with impatient strides and a beating heart; and then he cursed the Ambassador, for taking up his father's time at so critical a period of his fortunes. But his intemperance was of no more good in expediting the departure of the one, than had been his anxiety for the other's welfare.

Time still continued to pass on, and the cursed Ambassador still continued to linger. In a fit of desperation, Horace was just about to burst upon the diplomatists, when he heard a little bell ring, which his quick ear recognised as the usual announcement of the Minister when dismissing a visitor; and he flung himself into a chair, waiting his own summons, and striving at the same time to still the eager throbbing of his heart.

He waited several minutes, but no summons came. The Ambassador was gone, he was certain—his father must be alone—he *must* see him. He dashed at once into the

adjoining room, and once more demanded of the plodding secretaries why Sir Robert had not been made aware that he had been waiting an hour to see him on most important business. He was quietly told that the Minister had had immediate notice of his son's visit, on the departure of the Ambassador, and had replied that he could not be disturbed, as he had a despatch to write of the utmost importance.

Horace was in an agony. All the bodily suffering he had endured throughout the course of his life, could not have amounted to the intense distress he felt on hearing this communication.

"I must implore you to go again to him," said he at last, "it is a matter of the greatest urgency. Tell him the business I have come upon is of vital importance. Not a minute ought to be lost in making him acquainted with it."

At first the gentlemen severally shook their heads, in their customary official way,



and continued their writing; but one—an elderly man—who had long enjoyed the Minister's confidence, imagining there was something in the tone and manner of the young gentleman that spoke an unusual errand, expressed his willingness to go and speak again to Sir Robert.

In a few minutes Horace was summoned to the presence of his father. When the door opened for him he could hardly enter the room, his feelings so overpowered him. He saw his father sitting quietly at a table covered with papers, evidently so immersed in his occupation as not to have noticed his entrance. Even in the intensity of his excitement, the young Member could not avoid a feeling of surprise at observing how calm, how cheerful, was the Minister's countenance. It was not the face he had seen disfigured by anger, when he had so timely interposed to prevent the two angry statesmen imbruing their hands in each other's blood. It was a countenance full of sun-

shine—so full, indeed, that even the thoughtful attention he was giving to his employment modified but a little the jocund expression that played around the mouth, and lighted up the whole physiognomy.

But Horace felt, as soon as he had sufficiently recovered from his agitation, that the time was too precious to be employed even in regarding features so beloved; and he cleared his throat to begin the important communication of which he was the bearer.

“Sit down, Horace, and tell me what you ’ve got to say,” said the Minister, without raising his eyes from the paper before him. His son felt that a form of address so cold, to one who had hastened, with the warm impulse of filial affection, to rescue him from a snare in which he was about to be encompassed, was anything but what he had anticipated; but he gulped down his feelings as hastily as he could, and at once proceeded to narrate the whole

of what Mr. Bubb Doddington's fears for his own interests had led him to divulge.

At first the young Member was a little too excited to express himself as perspicuously as he desired; but as he proceeded, he gained confidence and coolness. He fully expected that the news of such a coalition, brought together to agitate so bold an attack, through the royal prerogative, on the King's favourite Minister, would come upon him like a bomb-shell. His astonishment was extreme at perceiving that his father never once lifted his pen from the paper, except to dip it in his massive silver inkstand. Mingled with his astonishment was no slight degree of mortification. But he began at last to think that the Minister was so absorbed in writing the important despatch, that he could give no attention to his son's at least equally important communication. When nearly at the end of his narrative, he left off speaking.

"Is that all, Horace?" immediately in-

quired his father—at least proving that he was not so inattentive as he had appeared.

“I am afraid, Sir, you have not been able to attend to what I have been stating,” replied his son, somewhat dejectedly.

“I have heard every word, Horace,” said the Minister, looking up from his writing, for the first time, “but it so happens it is so much attention thrown away, as I was previously acquainted with every circumstance you have been so good as to communicate.”

The young Member stared aghast. His anxiety—his alarm—his earnest affection—his heartfelt devotion, had been as fruitless as they were superfluous. He felt almost ashamed that he had so unnecessarily betrayed the deep interest in his father with which his heart was full to overflowing.

“Your new friend, Mr. Bubb Doddington, is rather late in making his revelations,” continued the Minister, with a good-humoured smile. “Eager as he has been to

betray his princely patron, in the hope of its turning to his advantage, another has been more eager still. I know every thing, and am prepared for every thing. Nay, I am in a condition to inform you, not only that the proud old Duke of Somerset will see his Royal Highness and his friends hanged before he would stir a step in his favour; but that the seeds of disunion have already been sown among the Prince's most zealous supporters.

“The fools imagine,” continued the Minister, “that because I have appeared ignorant of their plot, their precious secrets are safe. They will find out their mistake when this grand motion of theirs comes before Parliament. I rather suspect my Lord Bolingbroke will then require all his boasted philosophy to enable him to endure his disappointment, and that Prince Frederick will discover—what I am afraid some ill-natured observers have discovered already—that he has been made a fool of.”



Our hero appeared lost in wonder at his father's apparent sense of security, and the quiet contempt he appeared to entertain for his numerous and powerful enemies. But in all this there was visible only the Minister secure in his own pride of power—of the father, there was not the slightest trace. Had he been an utter stranger to the family of Walpole, Sir Robert could not have exhibited more indifference to his son's presence, and less thankfulness for his errand, than he had done.

Horace would have given worlds, had he had them at his disposal, could he have heard a few kind words in recognition of the instance he had given of the strength of his filial affection, or a few earnest commendations of his political zeal. But in this eventful moment he seemed fated to feel more acutely than ever the insignificance of his position as a younger son.

He rose to take leave. "Yes," said the Minister, quietly resuming his occupation,

“I am too busy to afford you any further attention. This despatch must be sent off immediately.”

As he hurried out of the apartment, our hero asked himself, “Is there no way of thawing the ice of this man’s nature? Will no act of devotion in his son awaken him to the consciousness of being a parent, and impel him to shew a proper sympathy for his offspring?”

One proof of the intensity of his interest in his father’s welfare he had just given—this the urgency of the case had made him bring under the Minister’s observation: another proof had been given; but this—and he congratulated himself on the tenacity with which he had held the secret—he had hitherto concealed from his father’s knowledge.

He had sacrificed the most absorbing passion that ever thrilled the heart of man, on the altar of filial affection. He had offered up one of the loveliest, the worthiest, and most accomplished of her sex, as a peace-

offering to his father's love. Had he allowed what he had done in this memorable matter to transpire, he could not avoid coming to the ungratifying conclusion, that his reward would have been about the same as that he had reaped by his timely warning to save Sir Robert from the machinations that had so cunningly been contrived for his destruction.

## CHAPTER XII.

## A DREAM DISTURBED.

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE proved a true prophet. The grand movement, in defiance of royal authority, which covertly aimed at the overthrow of the Minister, was brought forward, with a wonderful deal of parade, by the eloquent and disinterested Pulteney, in the House of Commons, in the form of an address to the King, to settle on his Heir £100,000 a year, with as liberal a jointure to the Princess. A similar motion was

brought before the notice of the House of Lords, by the amiable Lord Cartaret. In the former it was defeated in a division, the votes for the Minister being 234, for the Prince 204; in the latter the result was much less flattering, the motion having been negatived by a majority of 103 to 40.

The philosophic Bolingbroke was so moved by the ill success of his machinations, that, in fit of distaste for public life No. 3, he abruptly left England, vowing he would never return to it again; and buried himself in the deepest seclusion attainable in a pretty cottage in the neighbourhood of Fontainebleau.

His illustrious friend took his defeat in still greater dudgeon. He abused his royal father more bitterly than ever, and of course did not spare the obnoxious Prime Minister—now hated a thousand times more fiercely than before. In that dogged sullenness which appeared hereditary in his family, he chose to put a great affront upon the King,



by hastily removing his consort from Hampton Court to St. James's, when about to give birth to a child; preventing the performance of those ceremonies which were necessary to authenticate the birth of a royal offspring, and endangering the lives of both mother and child. This contumelious act greatly irritated the King; and although the Prince ventured to make many excuses, and appeared as humble as he had before been contumacious, his royal father was too deeply offended to be easily appeased, and at last, in an angry message, commanded him to quit St. James's palace.

It is a curious coincidence, that George I. had a quarrel with his Heir respecting a grandchild, and just as summarily turned the Prince out of doors, as it might be called, as George II. did Prince Frederick. The latter found a domicile in Norfolk House, St. James's Square, where he kept up the indecorous squabble with his parent with a degree of rancour and vulgarity that greatly

scandalized the right-thinking portion of the community. But the Opposition enjoyed it wonderfully; and the disinterested Pulteney and the uncompromising Marchmont, the amiable Carteret and the other leaders of the Tories, took care to give his Royal Highness the advantage of their countenance and advice.

We must not forget to state, that the result of this division in both Houses of Parliament gave quite as much satisfaction to some little folks, as it had created in some great ones. The next meeting of "The Upper Servants' Supper Club" possessed certain remarkable features. The President maintained his presidential dignity undisturbed, to the breaking up of the party; the Vice having lost a great deal of that offensive assurance which had, on the last meeting of the Club, so very nearly brought them all to loggerheads. Indeed, the Pulteney end of the table looked what, in the graphic language of one of the Walpolites, was termed

“dumb-founded.” No one, however, shone so conspicuously that evening as their travelled fellow-member. Indeed, he made so imposing a display of what had been said at Eton and Cambridge, and what continued to be said in France and Italy, that those well-coupled hounds in livery, who addressed each other by the highest titles of the peerage, appeared as if they could not sufficiently express their admiration.

“I think I should like to take a *tower*,” observed the sky-blue-and-crimson gentleman to the other, “It ’s monstrous genteel to talk about Paris and Rome, and all them fine outlandish places, and goes a prodigious way with the women in the housekeeper’s room. What do you think, Duke?”

“I think tho too, Marquith,” replied his scarlet-and-gold companion.

“I suspect Mrs. Jenny is very much taken with that sort of thing?”

“Monthtrouthly taken with it, Marquith.”

“And Mrs. Susan will listen to nothing else?”

“She’th grown quite inthenthible to my meritth, I’m thorry to thay.”

The Duke sighed, and then the Marquis sighed. There was evidently a great deal in the back-ground respecting the Mrs. Jenny and the Mrs. Susan mentioned by these worthies; but as, at this moment, the brilliant valet of Mr. Walpole commenced a reminiscence of a certain extraordinary adventure of his in the Abruzzi, with a female bandit, they ceased their conversation to listen to the wonderful narrative, and no further insight could be obtained into the cause of their intense sensibility. But we must direct our attention to higher game.

Singular to relate, Horace Walpole was but little elevated by his father’s triumph; he had received such a fall in the unexpected reception of his warning, that nothing now seemed to have power to raise him. Possibly the foreknowledge of this result might have helped in causing this comparative indifference; and when his friends warmly congratu-

tulated him on the good fortune of the Minister, he received this evidence of their goodwill as if he had nothing to do with it. He felt like a servant listening to the praises of a master who had dismissed him his service.

For some time he appeared to have taken a distaste for public business—as though he had no interest in the conflict of Whigs and Tories, and cared only for the reputation of a man of fashion. He attended all the gay parties, partook of all the amusements, and shared in all the frivolous pursuits of what then constituted the *beau monde*. He became known to everybody, and every one became known to him. Amongst his acquaintances he did not forget to cultivate a good understanding with the female leaders of *ton*—indeed he might have considered himself on a very good footing with more than one of those fair philanthropists, whose lives shew a perfect illustration of the command so very difficult to follow—“Love your neighbour as yourself.”



Amongst these, he thought it advisable to pay every possible attention to Lady Archibald Hamilton; and her ladyship took care to make known to him that she was not indifferent to his merit. Their communications, however, had as yet been extremely limited—they amounted to nothing beyond compliments and flirtations, speaking smiles and telegraphic glances; but this is the kind of fuel with which Master Cupid dresses our human stoves, ready for the flame which is so soon to fill every little pipe in our bodies with its pleasant but dangerous heat.

Our hero did not think it advisable to make his visits at Norfolk House too conspicuous; nor was he satisfied that his Royal Highness could so far forget his hatred of the father, as to be particularly friendly to the son—unless some object was to be gained by it. He once had the honour of taking a hand at *whisk*.at the royal table; but, by some extraordinary accident, the Prince lost the odd trick to him; and this circumstance

was always remembered to his disadvantage. Bubb Doddington never could have done such a thing. Had he so committed himself, he knew full well his promised peerage would not have been worth a pinch of snuff.

But in this unprofitable kind of life Horace Walpole found little gratification. The vivacity of his friends entertained him; the inexhaustible spirits of such companions as Hanbury Williams and Charles Townshend, and the ludicrous eccentricities of the torpid wit George Selwyn, acted as a perpetual fountain of champagne, in which he might refresh and invigorate his nature, when weary of the influence of his own thoughts and feelings. But was he always weary of them? No. They might take one direction in which they were like eagles floating in an exalted atmosphere: that they were sure to have entirely to themselves.

Often, when returning in the early morning from a crowded rout or noisy ridotto, has the weary pleasure-seeker thrown him-

self on an easy couch or chair, and forgotten all the frivolous world in which he had so lately been moving; and with the pencil of memory dipped in the bright colours of the imagination, brought upon the disc of the mind those scenes of the past over which happiness breathed its exquisite sunshine—breathed, alas! but to show how vapoury, how transient, how delusive, were such phantasmagoria. But to the dreamer it faded not. It was all aërial—a *fata morgana* of the heart, as illusory as it was brilliant. But he who throws himself back on the past, looks solely for its beauty; and in the past only Horace knew he could look for beauty—at least, that loveliness that contents the soul—that light that throws no shadows.

What mattered it to him that these indulgences formed that forbidden fruit of his tree of knowledge? He gathered and ate, and ate and gathered, as though he were still in his Paradise, and had no commandment to infringe. He beheld those wondrous

eyes, he heard those eloquent sounds—round him there floated a magic atmosphere of love and music—passionate hopes sparkled like stars in that exquisite firmament—his pulses bounded with a delirious ecstasy—his whole frame thrilled with an incommunicable bliss—he felt transported into that region of never ending sunshine, the Elysium of classic song, where the Loves and the Graces are the attendants on human perfectibility, bearing golden beakers of ambrosia and nectar, impossible to resist—he fancied he clasped in his rapturous arms a form, whose divine proportions put to shame the charms of all the fair deities of Olympus—when his ecstasies were very suddenly and very rudely put to flight by a voice that he soon became conscious was much too earthly for so exalted a locality as the Elysian Fields.

“Now, if your Honour pleases,” exclaimed the very sleepy Fibbs, with a bedchamber candlestick in his hand, trying to rouse his young master, while he vainly attempted to stifle a

yawn, "it's very late, Sir; *allez coucher*, as we say in France. You'd better go to bed, Sir; it's rather early hours for a *siesta*, as we say in Italy. I've been waiting your return, reading 'Tom Jones,' till I fell asleep over a love-scene with his sweetheart, Sir." This was accompanied by an opening of his mouth, of such prodigious extension, that checking it was evidently out of the question.

His master stared at him unconsciously for a few seconds, then rose from his recumbent posture, and—oh horror to the romance which had so lately transported him amongst the Loves and Graces!—stretched out his arms and followed the sleepy demonstration of his attendant, in a manner that threatened immediate dislocation of his jaws.



## CHAPTER XIII.

## A WOMAN'S HEART.

THERE is no subject more written about, and, as usual, less known, than a woman's heart. We have our moral anatomists who profess to shew the whole arcana of its curious secrets, and dissect with equal assiduity and care its finest fibre, that they may make the world thoroughly acquainted with it; and then they boast of their familiarity with its structure and economy. But when we hear of such claimants of this rare know-

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ledge, we are strongly tempted to exclaim—after the fashion of a second-rate painter of the last generation, when informed that a royal personage had declared that he was well acquainted with him—“Pooh! it’s only his brag.”

These subtle inquirers and deep observers will, nearly always, be found lamentably ignorant. A woman’s heart is one of the lost books of Euclid:—not one unattainable problem, but a whole volume of them. Our progress in such mathematics enables us to see only a short distance into the difficulty. We are cognizant of its inconsistencies and contradictions, but we neither pretend to analyze nor to explain them.

In the instance of our heroine, we are perfectly aware of the combination of incoherent qualities that may be said to form her character. But in our eyes, woman is THE SPHYNX, typified by the inexplicable monument of the Egyptians—an unexplainable conundrum—an *Ornithorhynchus paradoxus*,

more marvellous than the naturalists of Australia have made known to us. We are not professed reasoners on such riddles; and if Arabella Falkland seems to act at variance with what some writers term her idiosyncrasy, we must not be expected to expound a phenomenon so very common with her dear sex.

Consistency, now-a-days, among the lords of the creation, is a virtue as completely forgotten as the composition of the Greek fire; or, if ever to be seen, it is in those who are consistent only in being inconsistent. What the philosopher Square designated "the eternal fitness of things," has long become the exact reverse. Nothing is appropriate but what is most opposite. Impossibilities are matters of course, and contradictions the best possible logic.

Our holy men rival each other in exhibiting every vice that can most degrade humanity. If they are not wolves to their flocks, it is because they take care to prove

themselves more inonstrous beasts.\* Our learned men stultify themselves by follies of which a child would be ashamed. One sees incredible marvels by looking through his legs; another discovers impossible comets when most probably his legs refused to support him; and a whole tribe of them are at feud with each other as to the best means of preserving for the present the rubbish of the past. Our wealthy men emulate

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\* Perhaps it may be thought hard, an entire profession should be stigmatised for the unworthiness of a few of its members; but when at least a dozen cases of clerical delinquency have lately occurred, embracing the most atrocious crimes in the calendar of wickedness, including incest, adultery, fornication, forgery, drunkenness, and simony, and the criminals are still suffered to retain their sacred employments, we, in common with all the right-thinking part of the laity, cannot help considering the profession to be lamentably disgraced. The Quakers, when one of their body misbehaves himself, dismiss him from their community—an officer, acting in a manner unbecoming an officer, is cashiered—and even a common soldier, when found to be an incorrigible vagabond, is drummed out of his regiment. A Minister of the Gospel alone has the privilege of exhibiting the most revolting depravity, without the fear of expulsion from his order.

each other in extravagant donations towards a memorial to some man whose riches almost exceed calculation; whilst the newly-born of their fellow-creatures, from being denied covering when quitting the *charity* that allowed them birth, perish in the freezing blast; and the equally helpless aged, turned out of the hut which had always been to them a shelter, however little it may have realized our ideas of a home, are left to die in the first ditch to which they can crawl. Undoubtedly we have come to the eternal *un-fitness* of things.

It is not the mesmerised only who see with the backs of their heads: all society have got the same extraordinary gift of beholding objects out of their sphere of vision;—nay, so strange is this quality, that the human mole, who never observed an inch beyond his nose in a natural way, can readily discover the most minute trifle when he can regard it in some inapproachable position. It is such as these who overlook



the crime that taints the air they breathe, while subscribing their thousands to convert the heathen in the Antipodes.

It used to be accounted a singularity in the waterman that he should look one way and row another; but now the whole family of mankind follow the same fashion: they are content to go backward, and see only what they have passed. We should not have, unless this were the case, the constant references to Hansard in one place—the voluntary return to a long abandoned faith in another—the eager adaptation of art in its most uncouth barbarism—and the frantic enthusiasm for literature in its swaddling-clothes. In short, we are all looking one way and rowing another.

If such irregularities are common in one sex, there surely can be little occasion for apology for whatever there is of a like nature in the other. Heroines may be regarded as the comets—if not of the Copernican, of the Colburnian system; they be-

long to that class of the heavenly bodies that invariably pursue an eccentric course. Our heroine will be found peculiarly to deserve this similitude. She was passionately in love with Horace Walpole, and she had long professed to consider him unworthy of a thought; and she was exclusively devoted to the unfortunate exile her father had served with such rare fidelity; yet cared more to hear how her discarded lover was distinguishing himself, than the probabilities there existed of her Sovereign's triumphant return to his dominions.

Several months had passed since the abrupt termination to the sweetest enjoyment Arabella had ever known, when she was sitting with her father in one of the elegant apartments of their villa, looking out into the open country, with a volume of Petrarch in her hand. The book, attractive as it was, had engaged but little of her thoughts. The poetry of the Italian lover seemed tame compared to that which had been breathed

so glowingly into her own soul. The hand that clasped the open volume was in her lap; and her eloquent eyes, softened and subdued by some tender recollection, rested themselves on vacancy—a tear was trembling on her long silken lashes—and the light of the soul within seemed to flash upon it, making it a diamond more radiant than the most experienced lapidary had ever seen.

Arabella Falkland had so completely given herself up to her own reflections, that she did not notice she had for some time been the object of her father's anxious and tender scrutiny. His proud and gloomy features gave evidence of deep emotion, as he shook his head distrustfully, and ceased to take any interest in the pious work from which he had so recently derived such deep gratification. He sighed heavily. Just then there was a struggle going on in his breast, that imported much to his fair companion. He had lately been entertaining certain

ambitious speculations which sought the advancement of his idolized daughter, by an exaltation that very few fathers of his rank would have contemplated even in their dreams.

Lord Falkland valued his daughter's worth as equal to grace any destiny. But with this great ambition was great love. At the idea of her having to endure suffering, by the current of her affections being rudely diverted from the channel they had made for themselves, he caught himself wishing that Horace Walpole had not been the son of a man who had rendered himself so obnoxious to the Jacobites as the Usurper's able Minister; or that some prospect would offer for directing her warm young heart towards a more desirable object. This last idea reminded him of a circumstance that appeared to have escaped his recollection.

“ Arabella, my love! ” he exclaimed.

A smile broke over the saddened features

of the youthful beauty, directly she heard herself addressed by her parent; and all trace of that pensive tenderness which had so touched his nature, vanished like a vapour before the sun.

“What think you of his Royal Highness?” he added.

Now there was a good deal in this question that requires explanation. The confidence reposed in his counsellor by the Chevalier St. George, as the son of James II. was usually styled, afforded Lord Falkland opportunities of being on terms of affectionate intimacy with the royal children. The eldest had been a frequent visitor at the villa, and these visits had greatly increased since it had boasted so rare an attraction as the lovely daughter of its possessor.

The Prince of Wales—as he was considered by his father’s miniature Court—had arrived at an age when the influence of feminine beauty makes its way most directly to the imagination; and, attended as was this



winning charm in the person of Arabella Falkland with an intelligence that was even more attractive, it must not be thought very surprising that the young Prince shewed a marked preference for her society.

This preference was the key-stone in the ambitious structure on which the proud and fond father thought of rearing his daughter's happiness—his pride and his partiality leading him very readily to imagine, that if not for her own inestimable worth, and her descent from one of the most ancient families in England, as a member of the princely house into which he had married, he might reasonably aspire to such an alliance.

His daughter certainly took a decided interest in the youthful Prince: she was steadfast in her devotion to his family; and possibly her kindly manner towards him, and the pleasure his presence seemed to afford her, caused both her father and his Royal Highness to believe that she regarded him with affection.

“ I think Prince Charles possessed of many good qualities,” replied the young lady to her father’s question—“ He is ardent, romantic, and sanguine—very good materials to work upon for noble results, if the disposition of his Royal Highness be sufficiently plastic to allow of such work.”

“ You ought to know something of his disposition, my child, for you have had no lack of opportunity for studying it.”

“ True, Papa. I have lately seen a good deal of Prince Charles, but not sufficient to satisfy me that his disposition is everything his best friends could wish.”

“ You astonish me. Every one in Rome speaks in the highest terms of his Royal Highness’s amiability.”

“ I do not doubt that the Prince is very amiable.”

“ What would you have in a Prince ? ”

“ I would have energy—decision of character—high intellect—generous sympathies—and exalted courage.”

Lord Falkland paused. Was it to admire the lofty expression of that exquisite countenance, or to reflect on what he had heard? In a moment he spoke again.

“You think the Prince deficient in these qualities?”

“I have not seen any evidence of their existence,” she quietly replied.

“But you must remember, my child, that his Royal Highness is peculiarly situated. He is placed in such circumstances as render it impossible for him to find occasion for the development of such qualities. He may possess them—indeed it is a moral certainty that a Stuart *must* possess them—they lie ready for use, when the time arrives which should call them into action. We are not the masters of our own destinies. The best—the greatest—the wisest—are but puppets in the hand of the Great Disposer of events. The misfortunes of his family have placed his Royal Highness in a position that throws almost insurmountable obstacles in the way

of his finding for himself such a career as you and all his warmest friends desire for him. But our negociations with the court of France will, I have every reason to believe, in a very short time, open for the Prince the path of honour and greatness, under auspices as brilliant as shall accord with the grandeur of his birth."

"No one would or could rejoice at this more than myself—but"—

"His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales!" shouted their confidential English servant, throwing the door as wide open as possible, to admit a young man of fair and rather delicate aspect, slight figure, and graceful bearing, wearing his own light hair rather long, and dressed in a suit of purple velvet without ornament except the star at his breast.

Lord Falkland and his daughter rose as the Prince entered; and, assuredly, his Royal Highness had no reason to complain, either of want of respect or of cordiality in his

reception. The Prince began detailing, with great affability, and with much apparent light-heartedness, the gossip of Rome. Lord Falkland made respectful inquiries after the health of his father, and Arabella made similar allusions to his brother; but the Prince at that moment had but little to say respecting his family, and a vast deal about strangers, of whom the Falklands cared to know nothing.

Presently his Lordship was summoned away, and the two young people were left alone. The Prince immediately drew his chair close to his fair companion, and, looking into her brilliant eyes with no slight degree of admiration, began a conversation of a very different kind and tendency.

“What makes you so thoughtful to-day?” he inquired earnestly; “I do not think so divine a face ought ever to look serious.”

“I have reason to be thoughtful, your Royal Highness.”

“Oh, pray get rid of your reason, and



your thoughtfulness will of course go in its train. But what has happened? I trust nothing can have occurred likely to chase away from that angelic mouth, the smiles that clothe it with such ravishing beauty?"

"Indeed, every day I have cause to make me smile less and less—to make me think more and more."

"For Heaven's sake tell me what is the cause, that threatens to that charming face so much mischief."

"Yourself, Prince."

"Do you indeed tell me that *I* am the cause?" exclaimed his Royal Highness, taking her hand with a tender glance; "In the name of all that's deplorable, what have I done?"

"It is not what your Royal Highness has done that causes so much thought," said his fair companion, suffering him to retain her hand, "it is what your Royal Highness has not done."

"I am fairly puzzled," he cried; "perhaps

you are only amusing yourself; but yet you do not look as if you were jesting."

"It is far too serious a matter; but I will in few words explain what causes me so much reflection—indeed, I may add, without affectation, so much concern."

The Prince looked as grateful as he thought he ought to look, at being told by so beautiful a woman that he was an object of interest.

"The unworthy position of Your Royal Highness's family has long engrossed my best sympathies. I could not behold, without the awakening of all my sensibilities, the rightful Sovereign of my country reduced, by misfortunes which he had not incurred, to his present humble fortunes."

"Yes, divine Arabella, I am well aware of the goodness of your heart. Your kind feelings towards us do you honour, and be assured that I am truly and deeply grateful for them. But my father's dependence on other governments prevents any thing being

attempted to alter the state to which we have unhappily been reduced."

"Pardon me, if I say I do not see that. The King unfortunately may be dependent—but that dependence need not shackle the Prince of Wales."

"I wish I could see a way of doing anything: I should not be long in following it, wherever it led."

"With such feelings, half the difficulties of your Royal Highness's position may be readily got rid of."

"How?" cried the Prince, with lively emotion, as he continued to watch the expressive countenance of his beautiful counsellor.

"Heroic minds make their own opportunities," she calmly replied; "Alexander the Great was not much older than your Royal Highness when he set out on his career of conquest; and, though I am well aware he was very much better furnished for such a career, there is no doubt you have advan-

tages he did not possess, with all his resources."

"Pray tell me what they are, for I assure you I am quite ignorant of them."

"In the kingdoms he went to conquer, all were enemies; in those which ought to be your conquest, your Royal Highness has numerous friends."

"Granted; but numerous as they are, I am more than doubtful they would suffice without very considerable assistance. I am as eager as ever was Alexander to attempt such an enterprise; but this for one man to undertake, in my judgment, savours more of madness than heroism."

"Doubtless your Royal Highness has read the legends of our Holy Church—and must remember how the Primitive Fathers, Apostles, and Holy Saints of our sacred faith, established our blessed religion among heathen nations. They did not go with an army of ecclesiastics to take possession of the heathen soil, and by force convert the

natives to Christianity. The Apostle ventured unattended into the midst of fierce hordes, of which every individual would have made a merit of putting him to death. He preached God's Holy Word—his eloquence was his only weapon, his faith his only defence. He went alone, where every man was his enemy—he went, and conquered. The same exalted impulse that created a saint, under other circumstances would form a hero.”

The Prince gazed upon the noble expression in the countenance of his companion for some few seconds, with admiration that appeared too eloquent for language.

“Has it never occurred to your Royal Highness,” she continued with increasing animation, “that the greatest risk might be attended with the greatest results?—that more might be done under circumstances apparently hopeless, than where they were the most auspicious? The best provided expeditions have often proved the most signal



failures. What wanted the Spanish Armada to insure the object for which its vast means were collected? Its end was most disastrous. What sort of resources had Columbus for his great expedition? How limited were the means with which Fernando Cortez added the empires of South America to European rule!

“I am ever haunted by an heroic dream, in which an illustrious individual, in whom I cannot but feel the deepest interest, figures as a worthy rival to these great men. I fancy a legitimate Prince, long exiled from his country, suddenly making his appearance amongst his loving subjects—whose devotion is excited to the highest exaltation of which mere human feeling is capable, by his apparent helplessness—added to the confidence in their honour he expresses, by venturing in the midst of them, with little but his own sword and his good cause to back him in his glorious enterprise.

“I imagine a flame of the most ardent

loyalty kindled in the breasts of a few generous men by this stirring spectacle—I see their noble examples followed by hundreds—those hundreds rapidly swelling to thousands—of daring and active partizans. I behold the irresistible shock of these brave spirits overthrowing the armed bands sent to oppose them, and then multiplying their force a thousand-fold with wondrous rapidity.

“I view the young hero at the head of a well-appointed army, proceeding on his victorious way, driving before him the hired bands of the Usurper of his royal dignity; and, lastly, Fancy brings forward the concluding scene of these inspiring pictures, in the shape of the triumphant entrance of this heroic Prince into the capital of his hereditary dominions, amid the hearty acclamations and grateful welcomes of his happy people.”

“You are right,” observed his Royal Highness, warmly pressing her hand in his own, as, with much emotion, he rose from

his seat, "You have pointed out to me, divine Arabella, what I ought to do. As Heaven is my witness, I am impatient to begin the adventure. Perhaps you do not know that negociations are proceeding with the Court of France, that hold out such a prospect to me as I should have most coveted, had not your thrilling words just convinced me that another was open, infinitely more glorious.

"I am about proceeding to that Court by its invitation. I dare not refuse its assistance, if offered under circumstances that render its acceptance advantageous to my father's interests; but should that assistance not be forthcoming, be assured, my lovely counsellor, the next intelligence of my movements that reaches your ear, shall afford you the conviction, that neither your exquisite beauty, nor your spirit-stirring eloquence, has been without appropriate results."

The Prince gallantly raised her hand to his lips, and the next moment Arabella Falk-

land was alone.—Not quite alone, for she had the company of her own bright thoughts, which assured her that the far distant star that had glimmered in her gloomy future, had received a vast increase of size and radiance—that her attachment to the son of the hated Walpole had lost that utter hopelessness in which she had for so many melancholy months tried to regard it.

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